The Commonweal

A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts and Public Affairs

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STORMS DARKEN OVER MEXICO

ACCORDING to a private letter from an American newspaperman who has just crossed the border out of Mexico, near Laredo, risking his life to smuggle documentary evidence concerning the religious persecution out of that misery-maddened country, there is now a new revolution going on, with fighting in twelve states, which, he predicts, will reach Mexico City itself within the next few weeks. Bridges are being blown up, tracks torn apart, trains delayed, roads blocked, federal garrisons harassed or routed—but of all this scarcely a line of news is being published in our secular press, because a strict censorship has been imposed by the government, which rigidly controls all the avenues of communication. This newspaperman, who went to Mexico as a free lance, testifies to seeing mobs of industrial workers parading the streets of Mexico City crying out against Calles, the Supreme Chief of the Revolution, Rodriguez, the last President, and Cardenas, his present successor, as betrayers of the cause of the workers, the common people, the masses, in whose name the revolutionary dictators seized and have exercised their unlimited power, with the army as their weapon.

From other sources, evidence comes indicating strongly, if not as yet positively proving, that another tempest of fratricidal bloodshed and destruction is to be let loose in Mexico. It may well be, however, that the riots and minor uprisings now rife will be so sternly suppressed by the tyrant in control of the army and the police that a genuine counter-revolution will not be possible. All depends on whether or not the Cardenas clique will be supported by other elements within the Revolutionary party. There are many signs of internal strife, intrigue, and lack of unity, but faced by the danger that would menace the entire higher command of the party if a really widespread revolt should come, the quarreling leaders

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may close their own ranks in time to prevent their common overthrow.

If, however, a general revolt should break out, as many well-qualified observers of the situation expect will be the case, the blame for such a tragedy will undoubtedly be attributed to the Church authorities by the revolutionary leaders. And this will be done in face of the undoubted truth that the bishops of Mexico, and the great majority of their clergy, in full and faithful accord with the policy of non-violence expressly chosen by them and following the express instructions of Pope Pius XI, have used all their authority, and all their influence, to restrain instead of permitting, still less to encourage, their outraged and martyred people from resorting to violent measures against their oppressors. Therefore, if civil war in Mexico again unhappily results from the outrageous tyranny of the government—imposed not only on Catholics for anti-religious reasons, but also on the despoiled and deluded masses of the people for reasons of greed and insane lust of power—while it would certainly send thousands of Mexican Catholics into the fighting ranks, that result will be due not to the provocation of their clergy but to the provocation of their oppressors, at last reaching a point intolerable to their human nature. They will fight—if they are unhappily exasperated to that point—not because their Church incites them to do so, but simply as men unable any longer to follow the path of self-restraint and prayer and patience and submission to authority, even tyrannical and unjustifiable authority, on which their priests and bishops have been leading them for many years. The sole means employed by their clergy, and by their own lay leaders, during these bitter years since the persecuting government flagrantly violated the agreement of 1929, have been purely civil, and legal, and constitutional, even under the oppressive terms of what is called the Constitution in Mexico, but which in reality is merely an arbitrary mass of edicts imposed upon the people by an armed dictatorship.

In the office of this journal where these lines are written, a Mexican priest who, through all the years of persecution which have now culminated in the avowed policy of the Mexican tyranny to crush out all religion, has labored in Mexico on behalf of his people—entirely in the spirit, and along the lines, of the peaceful policy of prayer, and education, and organization, laid down by the Mexican bishops—was asked to explain how it was that so much work along these lines had been successfully accomplished without great loss of life among the priests and lay leaders, in spite of all the provocations of their oppressors. He said, simply and with deep sincerity:

"We attribute this to the providence of Almighty God as the reward granted us for our willing obedience to the peaceful policy laid down for us by God's Vicar on earth, our Holy Father, the Pope."

Such a statement, no doubt, would seem to the violent atheists now controlling Mexico a choice example of the "fanaticism," and the "superstition" of Christianity which they are striving, as Nero did two thousand years ago, and as Stalin is doing, to eliminate from the souls of the people. But Christians, we think, whether within or without the Catholic Church, will be able to understand that statement, which so vividly sums up the spirit, and the expression of that spirit, which leads and directs the persecuted Catholics of Mexico.

What the future results of the first and most important part of the Catholic policy in Mexico—its reliance upon prayer and the sacraments, its practise of patience and fortitude—will be, only God can know, although believers in God will expect great good from it, in God's own time. As to the second part of their policy—their efforts to use peaceful and legal methods of organization and democratic agitation to obtain redress for their terrible grievances—let a witness who is no priest, or Catholic, but who has first-hand knowledge of Mexican conditions, testify as to the results of it. Mr. Carleton Beals said, to the Fifth Seminar in Mexico City in 1929:

"I have stood unflinchingly on the side of the Mexican government in their theoretical position regarding the Catholic Church, but I was almost deported from Mexico because I dared to speak of the personal abuse of Catholics in that struggle. Every personal right of every Catholic was violated. They were held by the policy, they had no legal protection, no protection whatever from the courts of Mexico. Often a Catholic was arrested and fined, and if he could not pay his fine he was sent to Islas Tres Marias, the Pacific Coast penal colony. It was a glorious moment for arbitrary robbing of Catholics in Mexico. They were jailed and mulcted of their properties without due process of law. If you can take away the personal liberty of a Catholic, you can take away the personal liberty of everybody else."

That was four years ago, and the situation described has steadily become worse and worse. Everything that can properly be done by American public opinion should be exerted promptly and powerfully to avert the outbreak of another civil war in Mexico—but if those efforts fail, let it be remembered that no share in the blame for such a tragedy may be justly laid upon the Church. All those who design to inform American public opinion on the gravity of the religious situation there should write to the National Catholic Welfare Conference for copies of its handbook of the facts in the case, entitled, "The Church in Mexico Protests."

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Week by Week

TEMPORARILY at least the projected co-operation between industry and government was the object of a little sniping on both sides, while the nation as a whole did its Christmas shopping in an impressively optimistic spirit. In some districts the tide of buying rose higher than it has at any time since 1929—a manifestation which indicates the restoration of confidence and the likelihood of more and better jobs in the manufacturing and selling enterprises. But anything like correlation of business and government objectives was still remote. Those who believe in more public ownership and operation were cheered by the President's threat to finance municipal power plants in New York and, beyond that, to extend the principle of T.V.A. to the nation as a whole. The railroads also ran squarely up against certain possibilities of little or no advantage to them. On the other hand, the loosening of NRA supervision, amounting in some instances to virtual abandonment of the whole scheme, has led to countless abuses. Here and there reports of further salary and pay cuts, followed by grants of bonuses to management, testify to an appalling resurgence of greed in the face of which social progress is difficult. It is growing evident also that many smaller industries are planning transfers to towns where the supervision and taxation policies current in metropolitan areas are not in force. Some suspicion legitimately exists that those who favor completely socialized production are willingly abetting the failure of leading industrial units to establish control of production. Thus the picture as a whole remains extraordinarily complex, with ideological and economic forces linked in the eddies which give the scene as a whole its confused and disturbing dynamism. Some clarity will doubtless follow the opening of Congress and the reading of the presidential message, though the chances are that the coming session will voice the demands of interested groups—such as the veterans' lobby and the public works advocates—rather than the aims of a unified nation.

The Trend of Events

THE RECENT outburst at Shelbyville, in Tennessee, though shocking enough to belong with the worst examples of what mob violence will attempt under the "lynch law," is a notable exception to most of these examples in its sequel. Too often, in the sickeningly frequent accounts of lynchings, particularly lynchings of colored men at the hands of white men, the record shows the officials involved to be indifferent, cowardly or openly complaisant. The society organized among Southern women to eradicate the lynching disgrace from the South, in a report a few years ago, specifically recognized this fact as having a vital bearing upon the whole problem. In the Shelbyville case, every official whom the news reports have covered so far displayed a firm conscience for public duty, and courage and promptness in acting. The governor sent National Guard troops to protect the colored prisoner during trial. The troops, using machine guns, gas and bayonets, repulsed three attempts upon the courthouse, killing three men and wounding several more. The judge properly declared a mistrial, and the sheriff spirited the prisoner away to safety. Even the appalling fact—appalling in what it reveals of the senseless ferocity of the mob spirit—that the lynchers, balked of their prey, turned upon the community's $150,000 courthouse and burned and blasted it into ruins, does not take from the victory which the official conduct of this case represents. Civilized and orderly elements in the South have been making themselves heard with more and more force; Shelbyville shows how strong they have become.

The Shelbyville Affair

CATHOLICS do well to review the year just ended in the light of the experience of their Church. Though the deeper significance of much that has happened must escape us who have been eye-witnesses, and though, indeed, the meaning of many things will be revealed only in eternity, the trends made manifest during the past twelve months are those which must be the concern of contemporary Catholic Action. Perhaps the most significant fact on the bright side of the account is the change visible in the Spanish-speaking world. All is not sunlight, of course. Bitter and brutal conflict is reported from Mexico; priests and laymen were tortured and slain during the revolts in Spain; and in several parts of Hispanic America wars and social broils profoundly influenced the religious situation. Even so the remarkable advance of a Spanish Catholic party which can rely on a solidly, brilliantly organized youth movement, the beautiful success of the Eucharistic Congress in Buenos Aires, and the progress of social action in many countries, notably Brazil, augur so many good things that the future seems to harbor a genuine promise of great achievement. Should it not lead us to ponder once again the existing need for vigorous cooperation with Hispanic Catholicism, with the destinies of which we are bound up through the substantial realities of geography and tradition? And we may profitably add to these justifications for optimism the record of missionary activity in many fields, where solid progress was made despite political and ideological unsettlement. The trend toward nationalism,

The Church and the Year

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obvious always during the past fifteen years, is still growing stronger, so that the wise policy of training a native clergy is being vindicated.

IN SO far as the darker side of the ledger is concerned, the general religious situation in Europe has been an especial source of anxiety and hardship. Though Communistic propaganda was suppressed and weakened, owing in some measure to the dwindling influence of the Russian government, the Fascism which has arisen to take its place is hardly less dangerous to and incompatible with Christian feeling. The German-speaking countries bore the full brunt of the Fascist attack. In Austria, Catholics held their own, managing under Chancellor Engelbert Dolfuss to uphold a government committed to respect for the natural law. The struggle was often bitter, and no doubt some things were done which could not have been justified in calmer times. But the tragedy of the Chancellor's assassination by revolutionary Nazis was the truly heavy blow, and from it Austria has not yet recovered. The Hitler government in Germany kept up a silent but dogged war on the Christian churches. Catholics, tense and legitimately fearful, watched the Lutheran clergy lead a heroic combat for the freedom and integrity of the Protestant Christian creed; and beyond all question one result has been the healing of many sores opened by the Reformation—a development which means at least an accession of notable and noble strength to the soul of the Church. Meanwhile their own bishops, whose pastorals were suppressed and whose priests were driven in throngs to concentration camps, began to undertake a mission strikingly like that of Saint Boniface, preaching under the peril of martyrdom against a new paganism and its fanatical prophets the age-old Gospel of the Son of Man. Spiritually much in the picture is illustrious and regenerative, but the outlook for the Church is dark if the Nazi movement continues, almost by sheer force of ideological gravitation, to reach its proper fulfilment. Already German Catholicism has its lay martyrs—Gerlich, Klausener, Probst, Beck, whom the future will commemorate as surely as we now remember the Blessed Thomas More.

AT THE peril of making this commentary too long, we shall add a word or two about Catholicism in the United States. It has been said, often and rightly, that ours is a synthetic faith. The Church is not the home of a single virtue, of one temperament, of a flimsy "concordism" between the Faith and the world. It is the dome under which universal reality, the human race as well as the Divine Infinity upon which that race is contingent, blossoms into organic life, driven by the thirst of all being for the presence of God. And therefore, just as the Catholic life absorbed everything beautiful and strong in European paganism, it has long been evident that in American society, where it seemed to those who did not understand a mere feeble plant among many, the Church would gradually assimilate Americanism. We find not a few evidences of this, not all of them wholly sublimated or as yet acceptable, but some rich with promise. Thus the harmonious national response to the bishops' appeal for better and cleaner motion pictures is a sign that utterance in the language of this our country and this our civilization was found. Similarly much that was done for religious recovery, mutual friendliness and caritative cooperation carried the Catholic vitality farther into the world now existing than would have been possible on the basis of other premises. Thus while the pressure of economic and social uncertainty bred dangers to religion and religious activity, the energy of the Church seemed to increase proportionately, justifying that reflection in which Newman beheld the authority of the Faith testified to primarily by the dire need for it.

Sociable Justice

WE WERE talking the other day to a man whose mother was somewhat of a social arbiter in Washington when there used to be there about as genteel and cosmopolitan a social life as any to be found in this country. He was telling of some of the simple rules which she enforced by the obvious device of being pleased with those people who followed them and cool to those who did not. One was that people who were invited to dinner, rose and made a serious effort to depart at ten thirty. This made a dinner during the week not such an overpowering affair wreaking vengeance on the tired business man or the tired statesman or tired diplomat the next day. Persons who dislike to say the last word until after midnight would be treated to a little unmistakable hauteur, or frigidity, if they did not have sense enough to get up and go with the others. A particular friend who it was desired should stay was given the specific invitation to do so. The ten-thirty dinner dead-line permitted the host and hostess, if there was a ball at Rauscher's or the New Willard, to get on to it comfortably under their own steam and steerage without, unless they deliberately planned for that, a mob movement. These little things, and many others, are not very important but they do help to the enjoyment of that prime amenity, sociability. In the world's present state of preoccupation with political and economic plans for social justice, the small courtesies of human association seem to go by the board; and that is a pity, for most of them have a simple basis of common sense and common considerateness.

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MORE OR LESS PUBLIC WORKS?

By GERHARD HIRSCHFELD

Whether public works programs are antidotes for depression maladies is a hotly debated question. The author of the following paper begins with one statement upon which all agree: that the government itself views such works as a desperate remedy in a desperate situation. He then attempts to sketch two pictures of the results of a heavy spending program. The first has to do with what can be expected to follow immediately; the second is concerned with what would follow over a longer period of time.—The Editors.

ECONOMICS, most readers will agree, is one of the most controversial subjects under the sun. Because after thousands of years of economic history we do not know yet how certain economic measures will work out. When Pharaoh (I think he was the inventor) introduced the turn-over tax, he had very likely as good mathematicians as we have today. And he guessed the anticipated yield with about the same degree (or lack) of accuracy as we do. Hence, the history of economics is full of experiments. If they failed once, that does not mean that they may not be tried again. In fact, many of our modern weapons are mere duplications of more or less ancient precedents. Tariffs are; gold hoarding, silver coinage, central banking fall in the same category; and so do public works.

Since it is not possible to please all theories on public works, be it duly recorded that, far from being an economic cure, public works are a headache and an admission of a disorganized and poorly administrated economic body. For what else does the State declare by its autocratic public works program but this: "There is work needed for many millions of unemployed; there is work needed for many hundreds of plants and mines and factories, with some railroads, shipping lines, wholesale and retail outlets thrown in for good measure. Let us add two and two, and produce beautiful parks and playgrounds, docks and bridges, schools and hospitals, streets and tunnels, dams and ships and viaducts, highways, and sewer and water systems. Then we shall all be happy"?

This is what the government has to say about public works. It takes the situation as it is, and tries to make the best of it. For the government has to act, and cannot afford to sit idly, philosophizing about the matter. It is confronted with widespread unemployment, with idle factories. And if it does not act determinedly and with a sizable amount of success, it will find the handwriting on the wall in due time.

But the question may occur to the reader: what has the government to do with a situation which involves, on one side, the producer, that is, the mills and mines and factories, and, on the other side, the prospective customer who now may be unemployed? If I buy a paper at the newsstand, I do not apply to Washington for a permit; and if the producers aim to sell their merchandise to the people, it is hard to see why the government should come in and play the mediator, or the sales agency, or whatever you wish to call it. If this is an economic proposition, it is (or ought to be) outside the sphere of the government. Unless, of course, things have gone from bad to worse, upsetting the whole economic applecart.

This, however, is what happened last year; and the government was forced to step in. But I firmly believe that one should be extremely careful to draw conclusions from the experience of an emergency, and to generalize from acts that should rather be left isolated. No doubt, the government was forced to take on obligations on which private business ability had fallen down: namely, to feed and clothe and shelter the population of the United States. No doubt, the government had to spend billions of dollars to save millions from outright starvation. But also—and also without doubt—the government should not make a habit of saving the lives and the economic fortunes of its private citizens. This is what it is about to do.

After having spent on relief, partly in cash and partly in commodities, some $3,000,000,000, the government now proposes to inaugurate a large public works program which is to assure employment to millions of people, and billions of dollars' worth of orders to industry. People will earn money again, and industry will once more be able to produce on a large scale. In other words, the two most powerful factors which are moving our economic world will be stimulated at the same time, and through the same medium: public works. And these two factors are buying power and industrial production.

This program is almost identical with the new policy of the National Industrial Recovery Board, namely, to attract the consumer by low prices which, in turn, are to be achieved by permitting mass-production plants to operate at capacity, thus reducing unit costs. Increased demands, and therefore production, will make for larger employment and will at the same time cause prices to stiffen.

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This is a neat program, and crowded with promising perspectives. It has only one fault: it comes from the government, it is sustained by the government, it would collapse without the government. If, then, in this new line-up, the government would occupy an absolutely dominant position, one might as well admit that the old economic order, not only that of 1929 but of the 150 years preceding Black October, has come to an end. For this, there is little if any justification, if one will recall that the past five years of depression, hard as they may have been, are a short period, indeed, in comparison with the preceding economic history of the country.

It may not be amiss to point to the rather subordinate part which the government has played in that economic history. In fact, comparing this country with Europe, it will be found that the latter has suffered and is suffering from "too much government," and among other results, their countries are flooded with public works; whereas the United States has built its economic house without much patronage from the banks of the Potomac River, and up to now this house has had nothing whatever to do with public works, for the simple reason that public works had no place in the American economic scheme.

The business cycle, as is well known, fluctuates between production and consumption. At least, that is what it so far has done. In this line-up there is no place, and never has been a place, for the government, except in emergencies—which is to say, only for limited periods of time. The New Deal changes the old direction and proposes expenditures of about $12,000,000,000 over a five-year period. This, it is claimed, will go a long way toward stimulating industry, absorbing the unemployed and, last but by no means least, making use of the idle funds that are rusting in the vaults and safes of the banks: they are estimated to run to about the same amount, that is, $12,000,000,000.

In other words, this public works program (which, though at the time of writing only in the formative stage, is still of importance because of the principle involved) looks like a cure-all method. It aims at achieving four objectives, no more and no less: namely, to finance industry, to bring relief through employment, to increase purchasing power through wages, to bring the idle banking funds into play. And—not to forget—it gives government a place in the business cycle. What would it do to business?

First of all, it would finance industry. And industry would have a reason to like it. The average producer today has to show the banker, no matter how much encouragement the latter gets from the government, two things: first, that the investment is safe, safe against falling values, safe against speculation, safe against dropping sales, in short, safe against loss; and secondly, that the investment will yield a profit. The banker may be willing and even anxious to help recovery by spreading the funds, but he will not and cannot ease up on the terms. He has a reason, too,

The banker is financing the government, the emergency measures and the New Deal. During the past year, banks in leading cities have bought more than $2,000,000,000 worth of securities of the government or its subsidiary corporations. About 40 percent (and this is a conservative estimate) of the earning assets of these banks are invested in government rather than private loans and securities. The yield on these government papers is very small—the interest rate is almost on a record low. No wonder the bankers are starving for good, that is, profitable, investments which will make up for the meager return from government financing. Perhaps, if it were not for this (which may or may not have been forced upon the bankers), the banker could afford to lend out money more cheaply—not quite as cheaply as the government gets it, but at any rate below what he likes to make now that he has to make up for the low yield of the government papers. Perhaps, also, the banker might have figured that, if it were not for the position the government is now occupying in our national economy, there are tremendous investment opportunities open to him and his billions: building and the heavy industries, obsolete machinery, the need for public improvements, the railroads and the home owners—a wide, wide field.

One may ask: why didn't he see and grasp the opportunities a year, two years, ago? But then, there was neither security nor profit in the investment. Perhaps this has changed. Possibly rising values, rising prices, rising activity and production and sales have changed the outlook of the investment banker. But, if he now looks at things with different eyes, he will not be able to see far—for right in front of him there looms a big obstacle, obstructing view and perspective and opportunities: public works. They take care of the investment, they attend to the opportunities, but they do not care for security of investment to any great extent, or for profits, for that matter.

The banker waits, though it is tough to wait sitting between the chair of overflowing funds and that of investment opportunity. Meanwhile industry will take the money without having to be asked twice. Put one down for industry.

The government, of course, will have to borrow the money, if only a few billions every year. The money will be borrowed from the bankers who have it. Eventually it must be paid back by that part of our economy which is the most productive, that is, chiefly by industry. Chalk one up against industry.

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Happy will be the men who will find jobs in this big public works scheme; they will be earning money again. And the government is anxious to get away from cash relief which bears a disturbing resemblance to the dole. Hence the five-year program. Seen from an economic viewpoint, cash relief is a gift; public works is an enterprise in which wages are merely one cost item. Other items are materials, transportation, the cost of the site where construction takes place, plans, preparation and hundreds of other things. Wages, to judge from the experience of industry, would run to about 20 percent of the total cost of the respective project. Throwing in the advantages of government ownership in some cases and of government operation in others, wages may here and there represent as much as 50 percent; they may. At any rate, between relief and public works, the latter are by far the more expensive.

All these factors, important as they are, come to look rather pale if held against the vision of long-term recovery. For what are these public works? Are they factories, mines, machine shops, in short, industries, that build and produce and yield, that live by their own momentum, that create their own future? Of course not. They are not creating, they are being created. They do not live a life of their own. Some of them may be self-liquidating, but very few, indeed, can boast of a *perpetuum mobile* in their own breast. Consequently, at some future date they will cease to give employment, they will cease to require raw materials from the mines, and finished products from industry. Some time hence, the roads and the tunnels, the bridges and civic improvements, will be there ready for use; but it will take another, a greater, economic power than public works to use them, it will call forth the full strength of a prospering nation to take advantage of the improvements and facilities thus created. A $1,000,000 home may look impressive to anybody who sees it. Yet, its intrinsic value is derived from the $1,000,000 income that made its construction possible. Muscle Shoals, as it stands, is a picture truly overwhelming in the technical and mechanical power that it conveys. But look what the failure of its economic adaptation made of it: a headache and an admission of a costly error.

So with public works. In themselves, they are truly an emergency measure. And even then it should not only be figured what it costs to build them, but also what it costs to run them. At some later date, the government will be confronted with three problems arising out of the temporary, the emergency, character of public works: First, how to amortize the cost of public works; that means a pile of taxes. Secondly, how to operate and manage them; that will take a large administrative body and probably increased local and federal expenditures. Thirdly (and most important), how to maintain the stimulus in employment, in industrial and business activity once public works have come to an end.

Our friends on the other side of the Atlantic have been so good as to try enough in the way of public works during the years since the war to give us a definite negative answer on all three counts. I have yet to hear from any government in Europe or elsewhere that has successfully completed a public works program and launched from its completion into the normal economic life of the nation. Instead we have lots of statistics to show that once public works have started, they assume the character of an avalanche in the Alps, or of currency inflation. Its momentum (of getting governments ever more deeply involved into the business cycle of a nation) will run its full course. Just where that course ends, except in economic dictatorship, we do not know.

One explanation offers itself. As I said in the beginning, the business cycle is composed of two elements, the producer and the consumer. Economically, the government has no assignment in this set-up. If it yet insists on being included, helped by the pressure of an emergency, the business cycle shows three factors, the producer, the consumer and the government which really should come first. Because from then on, business is largely being done on a patronage basis. It seems obvious, then, that whatever the government does in the way of business activity—be that financing, or road-building, or power-development, or any of the thousand-and-one things the government is presently setting out to do—must necessarily take away from the other two elements, and chiefly from the producing one. Hence we find the government's gain (if any) the loss of business activity in the terms of individualistic enterprise.

In an emergency anything goes, regardless of whether it goes for or against business. For then, the social plight and human misery are rightly in the spotlight. One should be careful, however, to draw a determined line between the freedom of government action as granted under the terms of an emergency, and between the requirements of a more normal course of the nation's economic life. The latter is the one that, in the long run, has the final word about economic prosperity or human poverty.

Candelabra

The maple tree's a candelabra,
From stark branches gleam the stars,
And on its most conspicuous bough,
Vividly, burns Mars.

LE BARON COOKE.

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WHAT IS A BOY SCOUT?

By EDWARD ROBERTS MOORE

WAS IT not Francis Bacon who listed as one of the chief causes of error the unfortunate habit many people have of issuing profound observations on subjects that they know nothing about or, at most, with which they have but passing acquaintance? With no personal animadversions, I commend this statement kindly but firmly to school teachers, government officials, dramatic critics and book reviewers. There is something, I suppose, in our psychology that explains it all very simply and very naturally. A school teacher just can't say, "I don't know," ever; neither would you nor I, if every day we had to stand in the gaze of forty pairs of eyes as the personification of all knowledge. A government official—did you ever have extensive dealings with government?—must be right; how else will the people be able to have confidence in government? And as for dramatic critics and book reviewers, there would appear to be something in the very nature of the profession which immediately endows a hitherto very ordinary and, often, a very likable person with omniscience, inerrancy and a deep and all-pervading scorn for the ignorant rabble who comprise all the rest of mankind.

A good instance was the review of Dr. Hurt's book which appeared in the October 26 issue of THE COMMONWEAL.[1] Let me make myself very clear. I have no comment to make on the review in so far as the reviewer restricted himself to discussion of the volume before him. In fact, I will admit that I have not even read Dr. Hurt's book, though of course I intend to read it. I will go still further and confess that I have heard that some at least of the criticisms of the reviewer are points well taken. But I maintain that the reviewer stepped out of his field, went beyond his commission and fell into serious error when he leaped from the criticism of a volume from the pen of a Boy Scout official to a sweeping condemnation of Boy Scouting in general.

It is evident that the writer has built up in his own mind an idea of Boy Scouting which has no objective reality. He does not know the real philosophy of Scouting, nor can he be acquainted with pronouncements on Scouting that from time to time have emanated from high ecclesiastical sources, even from the Supreme Pontiff himself. Or if he is acquainted with them, he must be one of those people who refuse to eat meat on a Friday holiday even though their bishop has issued pronouncement that they might!

Let us do a little analyzing of our own. Addressing a group of priests gathered a short time ago to discuss Scouting, Dr. Ray O. Wyland, director of the Department of Education of the Boy Scouts of America, made this striking statement:

> It is of the genius of the Boy Scout movement that in order to save its life it must lose it; that is, in order to accomplish its purpose, the good of the boy, it must submerge itself in the organizations that sponsor its units.

What did Dr. Wyland mean? We will have to go back a bit in history to understand. When General—now Lord—Robert Baden-Powell was formulating the original Boy Scout constitution, he came right smack up against that most difficult and delicate of problems, that of making provision, in an organization intended for the good of all the boys in the world, for the spiritual part of his program. That there must be a spiritual part there was never any doubt in his mind. In the constitution as it exists today is this significant statement:

> The Boy Scouts of America maintains that no boy can grow into the best kind of citizenship without recognizing his obligation to God. In the first part of the Boy Scout's oath or pledge the boy promises, "On my honor I will do my best to do my duty to God and my country, and to obey the Scout Law." The recognition of God as the ruling and leading power in the universe, and the grateful acknowledgment of His favors and blessings, are necessary to the best type of citizenship, and are wholesome things in the education of the growing boy. No matter what the boy may be—Catholic or Protestant or Jew—this fundamental need of good citizenship should be kept before him. The Boy Scouts of America therefore recognizes the religious element in the training of a boy, but it is absolutely nonsectarian in its attitude toward that religious training. Its policy is that the organization or institution with which the Boy Scout is connected shall give definite attention to his religious life. Only men willing to subscribe to this declaration of principle shall be entitled to a certificate of leadership in carrying out the Boy Scout program.

This lengthy quotation from the Boy Scout constitution does not embody a merely theoretical statement of principle; hundreds of otherwise qualified young men have been denied commis-

[1] Editors' Note: We shall confess to having overlooked entirely the implications which Father Moore and others have disentangled from that review. This is obviously a case where ignorance is not bliss!

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sions in Scouting because they refused to subscribe to it. The Boy Scouts are an actively faith-in-God-professing organization.

But how to manage this profession of faith without offense, in our non-sectarian civilization? The present writer, discussing the whole problem a short time ago with the Chief Scout of the Nation, Dr. James E. West, declared that the easiest solution would be for himself and all his associates to become Catholics! As long, however, as we live and must live in a world divided against itself on matters of religious belief, the problem remains.

What did General Baden-Powell do about it? Where did he look for advice? Believe it or not, all ye who denounce Boy Scouting as Protestant, he sought advice from the English Benedictines and Cardinal Bourne. Hence it was that years later, discussing on one occasion the progress of Scouting in the United States with Victor F. Ridder, he asked Mr. Ridder if there had been any difficulty with Scouting in the United States because "it was too Catholic." "Too Catholic?" replied Mr. Ridder. "You mean too Protestant, don't you?" "No," said Sir Robert, "I mean just what I said, 'too Catholic!' "

General Baden-Powell originally thought that the solution would be found in the devising of some form of worship that would be offensive to no one, a sort of "least common denominator" religion. Cardinal Bourne, of course, told him at once how utterly fatal this procedure would be, and recommended the plan that ever since has formed the basis for so happy a relationship between Scouting and the Church. The plan is this: Scouting recognizes (see Section III of the constitution, already quoted) the absolutely essential part that religion must play in character building. But Scouting feels that to attempt to provide directly and immediately this religious element in the training of youth would be most highly presumptuous on its part; it would be an unwarranted and unjustifiable intrusion into the field of the Church. Thus it comes to the Church and says, quite humbly: "We think we have something to offer you. Here is a program that we feel is based on a sound psychology of adolescence. But in itself it is incomplete. We have dealt only with the natural side of the boy. We have not presumed to go further. That is your field. If you think what we have to offer will help you in your youth problem, take it and use it as you will. Build on it, supernatural on natural, as house upon foundation. We will be happy if we have made even a minor contribution in your work for the boy of today upon whom both Church and State must rely tomorrow."

That is the philosophy of the whole thing. Scouting is neutral in religious matters, if you like, but neutral almost in the sense that the Brooklyn Bridge or the Pennsylvania Railroad are neutral. It considers religion out of its field, it leaves religion to those chosen and qualified to teach it. But it is an aggressive neutrality: it declares the necessity of religion and urges its practise. You see, the Boy Scouts of America conduct no troops themselves, but seek and require a sponsoring body, as a church, for each troop. And when a sponsoring body agrees to start a troop, it is made very clear that the Scouts are responsible only for so much of the program, the material and to some extent the cultural part of it. The sponsoring organization must provide the rest. When this point is properly understood, it is evident how unfair it is to denounce the Scouts for doing something that in reality they do not do at all, i. e., arrogate to themselves complete authority and ability to produce well-rounded and finished characters. That they do not make any such claim is the precise point in which Scouting differs from many other self-styled character-building agencies. Scouting is here, and, whether we like it or not, is here to stay. Personally, I like it. I think it has a lot to offer. I think that within its limits—and remember, these limits are self-imposed, and neither attempt nor pretense is made of going beyond them—I think it offers by all odds the most complete, most stimulating and most helpful boy program that has been devised. Used as it is in Bishop Sheil's monumental and extraordinary Catholic Youth Organization in Chicago, as the natural basis upon which the Church builds with the Mass and the sacraments her supernatural edifice of divine grace, it approaches perfection. We would be very foolish, and not doing full justice to our boys, not to avail ourselves of what it offers.

But even if we do not like it, we must reckon with it. We cannot afford to ignore it. This is not a very noble argument—it is something like avoiding sin because of fear of the consequences. That is not, of course, precisely what I mean, but take me literally if you like: we cannot afford to ignore it. Thirty-seven out of every 100 boys of Scout age—twelve to sixteen—in the United States today are Scouts, nearly 1,000,000 boys in all. An educational organization that has contact with and influences successive millions of boys cannot be ignored. Many of these boys are Catholic boys, and perhaps 50,000 of these Catholic boys are in troops attached to non-Catholic Churches. Don't blame the Scouts for that—blame your Catholic parish that does not sponsor a troop, although the Baptist or Methodist Church across the street does! Boys will be Scouts—it is our responsibility to provide them with the opportunity of being Scouts under Catholic leadership.

I called the Scouts an educational organization. It is primarily and essentially educational, and only secondarily recreational. Ninety thousand

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adults in the United States were trained in its philosophy, policy and practise during the past year. These 90,000—Scout executives, troop committee men, Scoutmasters—passed on what they had learned to the 1,000,000 boys I spoke of above. Do you want, by standing aloof, to force this vast and influential mechanism to became a successor to decadent Y. M. C. A.ism as the most vital active expression of Protestantism in this country for the generations that lie ahead? Because by labeling it "Protestant" and by staying aloof except for sporadic, aimless and ineffective attacks, that is precisely what will be accomplished. This mighty organization, that is thoroughly willing and anxious to help us in our problems—and let us not delude ourselves that we are meeting these problems ourselves; we are most emphatically not doing so, and a glance at the statistics of Catholic boys and men in correctional and penal institutions is prima-facie evidence of that—this organization, now at our service, if it is not so ten years from now, or five, where will the blame lie? Right here at home, because when it not only placed its resources at our disposal, but, in addition, very frankly and very humbly asked our help to keep its philosophy straight and its policies sound, we crossed to the other side of the road as if it had held up ulcer-eaten hands to us and through sore-infested lips had cried, "Unclean, unclean!"

I close with two pictures. A hundred miles from New York is the largest area in the world set aside for camping under Boy Scout auspices. Here are the camps of the five borough councils of New York City. In these camps during the summer are resident, as officers of the camps, three priests, whose sole duty is to care for the spiritual welfare of Catholic boy campers. Centrally located in this area is a Catholic chapel, where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved all summer. It is not, obviously, a non-sectarian chapel, used at various times by several denominations. It is a Boy Scout Camp building, set aside exclusively for the use of the priest and his flock at the camp. In it Christ dwells and reigns at all times. Here is no passive neutrality, no indifferentism!

The second picture: a large room in one of a striking group of buildings. In it five altars, and from six-thirty in the morning until eight-thirty, each altar occupied by a priest walking to Calvary with Christ. The occasion: a gathering, under the unworthy leadership of the present writer, of a group of priests, representing each a diocese, and each the special appointee of his bishop, to discuss Scouting and its relationship to the Church. The place: the National Boy Scout Reservation—Schiff Memorial—near Mendham, New Jersey.

Scouting—and the Mass! If we can use the former to get and hold our boys, so that we may sanctify them with the latter—why not?

AN ESSAY ON ELIA

By KATHERINE BRÉGY

CHARLES LAMB—that "very reasonable romantic," as Professor Blunden quaintly calls him—was born one year before the outbreak of the American Revolution and died just a century ago, on December 27, 1834. But Elia has had both a longer and a shorter life. He slipped suddenly into existence, by way of the *London Magazine,* in 1820, when Lamb was forty-five—that dangerous age at which people used to be expected to "settle down"; but when they actually are, and probably always have been, a little bored by the every-day routine, a little disenchanted by what they have or have not been able to accomplish, and almost extravagantly eager to try out new experiments. So the greatest of Lamb's "dream children" might be explained psychologically as a kind of Escape Mechanism—or more simply as that Second Self, just enough like the Original Pattern, to which we should all like to run off upon occasion!

Inevitably, all the bitter and all the sweet of Lamb's own story up to that eventful climacteric was distilled into the Elia who was to dissertate so succulently upon roast pig, to praise chimney-sweepers and to dream wistfully about childhood or the "dignity and sweetness of a scholar's life" at Oxford. By a charmingly suitable irony, little Charles had been born in one of the historic houses of London's Inner Temple—where his mother acted as housekeeper and his father as general attendant to Samuel Salt, Esq., one of the "Old Benchers" whom Elia was later to immortalize. This father was the Lowell described in the essay as "a man of incorrigible and losing honesty," with "a face as gay as Garrick's, whom he was said greatly to resemble." There were two older children, a rather remote John and that tragic sister Mary whose story was to be so inextricably bound up with his own; and at "seven years and upwards" the lad was entered—almost at the same time with another "inspired charity boy," Samuel Taylor Coleridge—as pensioner of Christ's Hospital, the "Bluecoat School." The mingled happiness and misery of the next seven years, for the place seems to have been a weird combination of picturesque medieval

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customs and eighteenth-century brutalities, were to be perpetuated in one of Elia's most colorful and controversial essays. But it must have been even before his admission there that the little boy had puzzled his way through Fox's "Book of Martyrs" (without being particularly prejudiced against the "Naughty Papists"!), or had drawn from an illustrated "History of the Bible" an almost lifelong horror of the witch of Endor. And it is pleasant to remember that even at school he was not too far away to be comforted by the occasional luxury of bread and butter and sweetmeats carried over by that devoted spinster, "Aunt Hetty," who, while of Unitarian persuasion, could never be kept from reading Thomas à Kempis or a Catholic prayer-book. There were also cousins in Hertfordshire, where some of the happiest memories of his childhood seem to have been crowded into occasional visits.

By 1789, Charles was considered ready to leave school; and as a certain hesitancy in speech seemed to unfit him for Anglican orders—"Posterity," remarks E. V. Lucas in his monumental biography, "has reason to bless that stutter!"—the clerkly drudgery of his life began almost immediately. For a year the boy was employed at the old South Sea House, celebrated later on in the first Elia essay. Then he passed on to the East India House, where he was to remain more than a quarter of a century. Having "eyes of youth," and being more or less closely in touch with the young men soon to inaugurate the Romantic Revival in English poetry, Lamb naturally began to write verses. He was also already making precious extracts from some of the less-known Elizabethan dramatists, and a shadowy romance seems to have been in progress with a Hertfordshire maiden. Then came the cataclysm of 1796, when Mary Lamb, plunged into temporary madness, killed their mother and seriously injured their father. To Charles, who alone seems to have shouldered the responsibility, it must easily have come as the uprooting of his world. "Write—as religious a letter as possible—but no mention of what is gone and done with," he begged his friend Coleridge: "with me 'the former things are passed away.'" So the verses were destroyed—no memorable loss, if we may judge from those recaptured and published later on—the young love forsworn; and a year later, with heroic devotion, he won permission to remove his sister from the dreaded asylum by solemnly promising the Home Secretary to "take her under his care for life."

It is a little staggering to remember that at the time of assuming this burden Lamb was barely twenty-two years old. But then he was of those who never pass formally from youth into maturity, carrying the two states with him to the grave—a "boy-man," as Elia was described. The loved and much-loving Mary (eleven years his senior) soon recovered, although the shadow of periodic instability was ever after to darken her life and his own. But he learned, like many another, to work and laugh on the edge of his volcano. By 1807, Godwin was publishing those "Tales from Shakespeare" for which Charles had written the six tragedies and Mary the fourteen comedies. The next years brought his still more valuable "Specimens of English Dramatic Poets Who Lived about the Time of Shakespeare." Both works are, of course, classics, and it is amusing to find that neither one was quite moralistic enough to please some of the contemporary critics.

However, Lamb had proved his power as a man of letters, and during the next ten years the little, black-clad East India clerk gradually became a London institution. He was a vivid journalist—so vivid, and probably also so convivial, that the public insisted upon taking his "Confessions of a Drunkard" personally. He had even the dubious glory of seeing his farce of "Mr. Hogsflesh" (alias Bacon) run for exactly one night at Drury Lane. Also he was an accomplished and understanding friend: and having the good fortune to be born into one of the great ages of English literature—was he not the contemporary of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Scott, Southey and Hood as well as of Hazlitt, De Quincey, Landor and Barry Cornwall, to name but a few?—he found no lack of companionship. By 1818, the milestone when his "Collected Works" were published, he wrote to Mrs. Wordsworth complaining rather ruefully that he was "never C. L. but always C. L. & Co." The next year—he and Mary were living tranquilly enough and he evidently believed he might at last hope for love again—came the incident of his proposal to and immediate rejection by the young comedian, Fanny Kelly, of the "divine plain face." A good many things seemed over and done with, the garden going a bit to seed. . . . Then the man who had always insisted upon taking his tragedies as comedies began the "Essays of Elia."

For the pseudonym he himself found several fantastic explanations: it was the name of an ancient clerk he had once known, it was of Italianesque origin, it was the anagram of "a lie." In point of fact it was a mask, just a trifle more real, because more voluntary, than the face beneath. And thin as the mask was, it gave the rather shy Lamb freedom to inaugurate the familiar essay in English by bringing into the printed page all the wealth of his personal experience, his whimsical fancy, his undefended sympathies and antipathies. The style he chose was purposely archaic; but so subtle and sensitive a critic as Walter Pater perceived immediately that "modern subjectivity" and a Montaignesque "desire for self-portraiture" were the well-springs

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of Elia. Both were perfectly served by that amiable anonymity which kept readers from misunderstanding or, what is even worse, from understanding too much. It liberated the wistful elf—twin brother to the "M'Connachie" who for so many years has kept Barrie from lecturing solemnly upon the hearth-rug!—who had learned to love so many curious things and to despise a few contemptible things. For Elia detested the "freezing, appalling, petrifying dullness" of "Pilgrim's Progress" as sincerely as he adored Sir Thomas Browne or "dear Margaret Newcastle." And while registering his "Bachelor's Complaint on the Behavior of Married People," berating newspapers and "things in books' clothing," and confessing (even as you and I!) that he could not "like all people alike," he had obviously come to friendly terms with the imperfectness of everyday living. "I wish," he once wrote of the tempestuous Hazlitt, "he would not quarrel with the world at the rate he does." For himself, Elia would have grace offered up not only "before meat" but for the joy of good books, "for a moonlight ramble, for a friendly meeting, for a solved problem." "I am in love with this green earth; the face of town and country; the unspeakable rural solitudes, and the sweet security of streets," he wrote one New Year's Eve. And next he, the reverent agnostic who seems to have wavered between Quakerism and Unitarianism, while criticizing both, was asking himself with innocent and eloquent anthropomorphism: "Sun and sky, and breeze, and solitary walks . . . the greenness of fields, and the delicious juices of meats and fishes, and society, and the cheerful glass, and candlelight . . . and jests, and irony itself—do these things go out with life?"

Irony was an essential note of Lamb's personality—almost as essential as compassion—and he rang all the changes upon it in his comments on men and things. One of the most delightfully outrageous instances was the interview with Carlyle in 1831, which sent the dour young Scotchman away with the conviction that he was a madman as well as a dipsomaniac: for sensing a lack of comprehension, the essayist had remarked that he was always sorry Guy Fawkes's plot had failed, and that the Royalists had not hanged Milton! But the very pathos of irony creeps into one paragraph of "My Relations," where Elia—who elsewhere refers to Mary as Cousin Bridget—pretends that his only sister has died in infancy, and muses, "What a comfort, or what a care, may I not have missed in her!" It is almost impossible to imagine Lamb without that care and that comfort.

In any case, his compassion was bound to flow out to the forlorn little chimney-sweeps or into a whimsically Franciscan "Complaint of the Decay of Beggars in the Metropolis." There is a strangely modern pertinency in his plea: "Reader, do not be frightened at the hard words, imposition, imposture—give and ask no questions. . . . When a poor creature (outwardly and visibly such) comes before thee, do not stay to inquire whether the 'seven small children' in whose name he implores thy assistance have a veritable existence. Rake not into the bowels of unwelcome truth, to save a half-penny."

This same exquisite sympathy which gave the human value—and the immortality—to Elia made him one of our most penetrating literary and dramatic critics. For has not sympathy the wisdom of the head as well as of the heart? Elia could perceive that cowardice might be chiefly "the absence of the romantic and the enterprising"; just as Lamb, when all England was rejoicing in the exile of Napoleon, could write to Southey: "I should not mind standing bareheaded at his table to do him service in his fall." In all the moments of his inspired criticism he had what he himself called "that intenseness of feeling which seems to resolve itself into the elements which it contemplates." Or shall we say simply that he had genius? For he, who could trip as fantastic a toe as Puck or Peter Pan, holds us awed by the rightness of his "Detached Thoughts on Books and Reading" or his immortal analysis of the "Artificial Comedy of the Last Century." And it is much that one who had lived so many years within contagious nearness to neuroticism and even madness should have insisted upon the "Sanity of True Genius," and pointed out that "it is impossible for the mind to conceive of a mad Shakespeare."

Life and the theatre were never far apart in Charles Lamb's reckoning, and by 1834 he seems to have felt that his own rôle was played to its close. Elia had written his last—Coleridge, his friend of more than half a century, was gone. The door of reason was scarcely ever open any more upon the Mary he had served so well, and for whose future he had plenteously provided. It was like him to steal quietly away while the old year lay dying—with New Year's Day, that "nativity of our common Adam," which he and Elia had loved to celebrate, waiting just over the edge of eternity.

The Bow of Hokusai

O bow of the dart invisible,
Parallel to the feathered dart we see,
Who now can pull so well the string
Of double archery?
Who now can pierce a falcon on the wing,
So that the bird will drop and die
And yet its double be transfixed
Forever in the sky?

WITTER BYNNER.

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LITURGICAL LEVEL IN ENGLAND

By EDWARD A. MAGINTY

AFTER thirty years of liturgical activity Catholic ritual music has ceased to be a reproach, but no one regards it as commensurate with the dignity of the Catholic name. The reason is not far to seek. In 1903, again in 1928, the Master, through His Vicar, charged us to cast the net over the other side. This we have not done. In consequence we appear to have labored all the night and caught next to nothing. Poverty and prejudice have played their part, but it is want of understanding rather than diminished loyalty that has so long delayed compliance with the decree.

The mandate lies enshrouded in what might be called the operative clause of the Pian encyclical which runs thus: "Special efforts are to be made (1) to restore the use of the Gregorian (Vatican) Chant (2) to the people (3) so that the faithful might again take a more active part in the ecclesiastical offices (4) as was the case in ancient times."

Unable to conceive what more the people went to Mass for but to pray, unwilling to believe they had anything to do with music at all, with the scantiest means of judging and little desire to discover what went on in the catacombs, we made no attempt to guess what the last three articles of the clause might mean. But the first was plain enough; the song of joy was to yield henceforth to the wail of the suffering dead. Indulgent Mother Church, for some mysterious reason, desired to spread a pall of misery over Catholic worship.

Steps were taken, nevertheless, to dispense the chant to somebody; not all at once, for the elder clergy were unacquainted with the Vatican form; the musicians knew less and what they knew they execrated. Enthusiasts, however, came forward and instructors slowly multiplied. Certain choirs were prevailed upon to set aside the harmonic for the Gregorian Mass, not as a means of reaching the laity but as an end in itself. As Gregorian training is as rare as boy-soprano culture, the result was bleak and irksome. The clergy held aloof. "That at any rate is not Catholic" was their verdict. Instinctively they had hit the mark; for the exclusive Mass, even Gregorian, in the public church is nowhere nominated in the Pian bond.

After twenty years, when the number of preceptors appeared to justify the measure, the bishops took the statesmanlike course of imposing the chant upon the schools, with the phenomenal result that, within a year or two, children, several acres of them at a time, were singing community-wise the Mass of the Angels on a greater week-day festival, and thirty or forty congregations a similar Kyriale, every Sunday. That was another pair of shoes. The most inveterate "non-conformist," uplifted by the majestic roll of ancient melody sweet and strong, was forced to confess that plainsong massed was little short of sublime. But it was not enough. It was not music. "Our people insist upon some music; music with a thrill in it; such as the choir alone can make." And so the collective parishes (more than twice as numerous today) were damned with gentle sympathy and "the delicious uproar of canorous infantry" (now to be heard in every city) was strictly confined to week-days.

In another generation probably every unit of the Church in England will have a working knowledge of one chant Mass, but, without peremptory action from above, it is extremely doubtful if they will be permitted to consecrate it within the solemn walls. Harmony will continue to be decanted through the Kyriale until the fact is recognized that, still, as ever before, the canonical rule in its widest scope satisfies the innocent craving for music of the best, and for that among other purposes the Church, though determined to keep the highbrow in his place, is ready to accept the very highest that genius can conceive or interpreter unfold. The first imperative need then is to show forth what exactly was the case in ancient times.

The *concentus* of the Mass was from the outset shared between nave and chancel. In the apostolic age the people sang the Gradual Alleluia and the Sanctus inherited from Solomon. In the fifth century their portion was increased by the Kyrie, in the seventh by the Agnus, two centuries later by the Sequences, in the eleventh by the Gloria and Creed. Because for the most part fixed, this division was called the "Common." On the sanctuary side the only psalmody recorded to the reign of Constantine was a highly ornate antiphon declaimed by a single deacon at the Gradual. This provision was expanded in the fourth century by processional psalms at the Introit, Offertory and Communion, like the Kyriale rendered by the ministers in alternation with the faithful. Each psalm had its antiphon, garbed, not in the popular syllabic, but in the quasi-melismatic, florid style of melody. About 450 the psalms were truncated or abolished but the antiphons remained. Because each feast brought its own fourfold suite of antiphons, the levites' appor-

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tionment acquired the designation "Proper"; because of the ever-extending range of its text and of the complexity of its modulation, the Proper became the exclusive perquisite of a clerical body called the choir, specially trained to sing it.

Out of this age-old custom grew the canonical rule that the Common should be sustained in the public church by the assistant laity; but, where there were no parochial laity, as in the basilica, the cathedral church, the royal ducal or other private chapel, to which the outsider was admitted only on sufferance, both Common and Proper were of necessity relegated to the choir alone. To the twelfth century, the tonal medium was the chant because there was no other; but, even so, throughout the Christian world, in populous city church or isolated chapel-of-ease, the *concentus* created to adorn the Liturgy was not only a vehicle of prayer but also a twofold source of innocent gladness: in the inspiration the laity felt in their own community song, and in the delight afforded by the choir in a musical technique not beyond the comprehension but beyond the capacity of average humankind, whether in the *bel canto* of the diaconal solo, the higher flights of the Alleluia *jubilus* or, in what Saint Bernard termed, the "refined sensuality" of the Proprial anthem.

In other words, music worthy of the name of art was authorized from the very beginning; not in the Common but in the Proper. As the science of harmony progressed, this too was seized upon to embellish the Ritual. Speaking broadly, the harmonic Mass did not come into being till the Renaissance (about 1450) when it found its legitimate way into the private chapels of the aristocracy, religious and lay. It is possible that here and there a public church choir so far forgot their duty as to jump the people's claim, but in the Church at large, to little more than 200 years ago, the parochial *missa cantata* with a dumb congregation was a portent virtually unknown.

Because the balance between choir and nave was never disturbed, liturgical music in England was characterized by propriety and a touch of splendor. And never more so than in the early decades of the sixteenth century when the laity thankfully and with both hands took their allotted part in the morning Sacrifice, and almost daily also in Matins and Vespers—nothing to wonder at when they knew the hymns and psalms from their cradle. In the poorer churches the antiphons of Mass and Evensong fell to locally trained men and boys reinforced by the Guild chaplains; but in Colchester, where the mayor and corporation formed the choir, or in any other parish rich enough to attract professional singers, the Proprium was illumined on high days and holy days by the contrapuntal idiom of Dunstable, Aston or Cornish or by the more sublimated harmony of Goudimel or Arcadelt, the immediate precursors of Byrd and Palestrina. It is to this august and fruitful system Pope Pius X has bidden us return. It follows then, indeed it is implied in the wording of the statute and unconsciously conceded by our own traditional treatment of the offertory, the "gem of the morning," that, so long as it can pass the censor, the Church does not forbid any Proprial anthem of Mozart, Beethoven, Gounod, Elgar or even of Stravinski. If this is so, the question of choking in a dismal fog of Gregorian gloom does not arise.

It is not surprising that the response was not immediate nor that even now it should be anything but general; for, wherever the Reformers prevailed as in England, the choral economy outlined above was destroyed root and branch. In southern Europe also, as the logical outcome of the Renaissance which the Council of Trent, preoccupied by the more serious issues of the Reformation, was unable effectively to oppose, it was mutilated and debased; until by 1800 the divine-comedy Mass of Haydn had become enthroned, the exclusive choir not only universal but, by reason of the exigencies of the symphonic style, for the first time in history manned in part by women, the chant eclipsed, the Proprium an esoteric mystery and the liturgical law a thing of the past.

In the struggle for existence so it remained to 1903. What ground we have gained since then I have endeavored to estimate in percentages; that they are not flattering is the natural effect of barking up the wrong tree. The essential condition of liturgical health is the cooperation of the faithful, and this is the distinctive feature of the system the Church decreed we should restore; but almost all our forces have been frittered away upon its logical opposite, the exclusive choir. This is the factor I proposed to underline.

The collective Mass must be reinstated. There are two ways open. The direct is that of the parochial *Schola* counselled by the present Pontiff-Royal in his Constitution of 1928; a liturgical sodality formed in every parish from the schools, the guilds and other societies in concentric rings around the choir as a nucleus; meeting weekly for the purpose of absorbing in three months, more or less, one melodic Mass, Gregorian or modern. More frequently preferred is the indirect method in which the choir first assimilate the Mass; but, from the first day of its introduction in the church, the parishioners are supplied with copies, choral marshals are installed, the organ heaves a generous sound, and an earnest appeal from the pulpit is made to all to join in singing as a duty to their faith. In three months, more or less, the dumb have learned to speak.

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Whatever the design with respect to the Common the choir have their own Proprial obligation to fulfil. Should the monotone or Vesper tone be thought too primitive a medium Father Laboure's unison arrangement of the Proper might be instituted by the least expert of cantors next Sunday week. The second requisite is to reinvest the "gem of the morning" with its long-lost capital O: to make the concerted offertory real (i. e., verbally correct) and thus relieve the Mass of the excrescence of the casual motet. The Laboure experiment leads to the four-part compilation of Tozer; this in turn to the full-length Proprial system in which all is harmonized.

In place of the double loss we now deplore, compliance will effect a double gain. The habit of song revived, the vernacular hymn takes on new life. Compline, the prelude to Vespers, clamors for reestablishment. Instead of stampeding the whole herd, it becomes, when sung collectively, a magnet to fill the church in the evening; not the least because, its Latin soon unconsciously memorized, it tends to be sung *intelligenter*. Moreover, since the chorus chants of Mass and Compline contain more than the 500 words friend Hodge employs, Completorians, though they have never known the ecstasy of a Latin grammar, need not be at any great loss to pass the time of day with a like-taught Patagonian or Chocktaw. Into the field of vision comes the universal tongue.

Congregational chant is as rich in the stable as in the basilica, but the opulent church cannot help surpassing the wayside mission in the perfection of its harmony. Nevertheless, the concerted Proper must perforce be an advance upon the concerted Common. The exclusive choir is under a cloud as irregular; as ineffective it is not valued. Because they have no appetite for chant and Cecilian Masses, men are increasingly hard to find and even the women are falling away. In consequence, the music of the proxy choir deteriorates. But, conscious of accredited status, Proprial singers may be expected to take a pride in their work and put forth their best. Free to concentrate the energies formerly claimed by one long tedious Mass upon two to four short anthems, each enlivened by the variety and interest that make the offertorial motet supreme, they are like to rise to a musical plane hitherto thought beyond their reach.

Cast the net over the gallery rails into the nave. Then choir and people in cooperation will at once begin to build up a choral Eucharistic system, as crystallized by Saint Thomas in the "Lauda Sion," full, harmonious, exquisite, unworldly, rejoicing heart and mind and soul.

Sit laus plena, sonora, jucunda, decora,
Mentis jubilatio.

SCIENTISTS IN THE U. S. S. R.

By TATIANA TCHERNAVINA

NOW THAT by good fortune I have escaped from the "proletarian" czardom and live peacefully in a "bourgeois" country, my thoughts turn to those of my colleagues who have not been so fortunate. I wish to recount their lot clearly and truthfully, for now I live where truth can be spoken and written. I am especially eager to have American readers know the actual conditions.

There is no doubt that people abroad are interested in the Russian problem. But the U. S. S. R. is still discussed as if it were Mars. I have just read an article on bolsheviks and peasants that is such a naive concoction one does not know whether to laugh or cry. Yet questions of life and death often depend on the correctness of foreign information. This is not just words. It is a fact.

When I was still in the U. S. S. R., a group of savants, including Professor Platonoff, were condemned to be shot. But after news of this had reached the foreign press, the sentence was commuted to exile. The lives of many men were saved only by the fact that the press of the world learned of the sentence in time. True, the condemned were still doomed to a slow death in exile, but even an hour of life is of the greatest value not only to the victims but to those near to them by blood or in spirit.

If one should ask why these men were to be put to death, no satisfactory answer would be obtained. They did not engage in politics, either before or after the revolution; their interests were wholly given to science.

Platonoff was the head of an entire school of Russian historians. At least for a quarter of a century, his textbooks had been used in Russian secondary schools and universities. Foreigners became acquainted with Russian history chiefly through the works of Platonoff. Yet this old Russian savant, a member of the Academy of Sciences, went through all the horrors of Soviet prisons, was condemned to death, then was exiled instead of shot, and died in exile.

Another member of the Academy of Sciences, Professor D. E. Egoroff, an authority on medieval history, was well known abroad, especially in Germany. He was a professor at Moscow University, Shaniavsky's University, the Commercial Institute, and Higher Courses for Women; after the revolution, he taught at the First Moscow University, in the Association for Oriental Studies, and elsewhere. He was first removed from all institutions of learning for "idealism in methodology," and then began working in the largest public library of Moscow, the Rumiantzeff. He was arrested and after a year of suffering in prison died. In the characterization of Professor Egoroff given in the Soviet Encyclopedia we find an explanation of his bitter fate: "He put himself outside the pale of Soviet science . . . he spoke of 'the eternal and inevitable progress of culture.'" This was the crime for which he was persecuted and hounded to death.

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"Capitalism marches over the bodies of dead men" is a sacramental formula often repeated in Communist publications in U. S. S. R. and abroad. One must live in the U. S. S. R. in order to understand who it is, in reality, that marches over dead bodies. But there is no room in this article to speak of the hecatombs that occur from time to time in the U. S. S. R. and affect all classes of population. I wish to describe here only the position of that relatively small stratum of the population which in Russia is called the intelligentsia and, in particular, the position of scientists.

My husband, a professor of ichthyology, was arrested and exiled to the Solovetzky camps, i. e., to a speedy and certain death. He had not engaged in politics, and refused to confess to the fantastic accusations invented by the O. G. P. U. Then, as a "measure of social pressure," I was also arrested. In prison and exile both of us compiled lists of the Russian scientists whom we met there. It is of their fate that I wish to inform the American men of science.

When we escaped from the U. S. S. R. to Finland, there still remained in prisons or in concentration camps hundreds of Russian savants as innocent as the most innocent of American scientists.

Members of the Academy of Sciences, Professors Liubavsky, Likhacheff and Tarle, were in camps.

In prison were the following historians: Gauthier, Rojdestvensky, Zaosersky, Butenko, Bakhrushin, Antziferoff, Wulfius, Gabaeff, Meerwart and others.

The following professors of science were also in prison: Wittenburg, Baltz, Raikoff, Bilanitzky-Birula, Sapojnikoff, Miss Solonina, Stern, Tzarevsky, Rachmaninoff, Prohoroff and others.

In prison also were the following museum workers: Izmailoff, Borovko, Mrs. Sapojnikova, Mrs. Platonova, Ernstedt, Pypin, Engelhardt, Weiner (publisher of the magazine *Old Years*) and others.

In addition, there were in prisons vast numbers of engineers, practical and theoretical, and many physicians, especially bacteriologists. They were all men of high culture, who in exile treated the sick until they themselves were mowed down by death, as the kind old man Bohl, and others.

Weiner and Meerwart were shot in prison. Butenko died in exile, and so did Wulfius. Almost all the rest have been condemned to ten years of forced labor in concentration camps or, literally, to a slow death.

The numbers of ordinary intellectuals that have perished cannot be determined exactly. It may be safely asserted that about 40,000 or 45,000 intellectuals passed yearly through the prisons of Moscow and Leningrad. The policy of terror was especially severe from 1930 to 1932, but it did not cease in 1933, it merely affected less eminent men and women, since the O. G. P. U. could no longer find many prominent persons. The personnel of many institutions has been so thinned out that scientific work is no longer possible.

Why does the proletarian State require so many victims? What has been the crime of these men of science?

Bolsheviks abroad speak of science and of cultural values; at home they find that "bourgeois" science should be ruthlessly destroyed and exterminated.

In science they recognize only one method, that of dialectic materialism, only one doctrine, the Marxist. Every deviation is considered as politically hostile to Socialism. But the interpretation of Marxism itself changes so rapidly that a given viewpoint may not last a year in official favor. No Marxist is insured against being suddenly declared an opportunist, a "deviator" (*uklonist*), or a "social traitor." It is sufficient to mention the fate of Riazanoff, the chief authority on the interpretation of Marx, director of the Marx and Engels Institute. He was declared a "saboteur on the ideological front" and confined in a "polit-isolator."

But are there not sciences to which Marxism seemingly has no relation, for instance, mathematics, physics, astronomy?

The Leninist Communists do not admit this. Marxism must embrace every aspect of life: politics, the ballet, positive science, music, teaching of foreign languages, and gymnastics. The well-known theoretician of Marxism, Bukharin, himself came perilously close to bring thrown out of the party several times.

Is it astonishing, then, that the most conscientious and honest scientific workers are not only removed from work, but confined in prisons and exiled to the Solovetzky camps, where, at an annual death rate of 60 percent, they soon become dead bodies? And over these dead bodies marches the proletarian State.

The removal of men not sharing the Marxist point of view from teaching positions could be understood, if not justified. But why are these men put to death?

The Alchemy of Frost

The wind's miraculous device
Has drawn all threads of fluid taut
Until within a web of ice
All flow of water has been caught,
And nothing but the touch of wind
And melting sun can loose and break
The girding snare that grips the lake
And binds the coursing river fast. . . .
Water is still till rains rescind
The tyranny of frost at last,
Till thaws restore the freshets' flow
Through scattered ambuscades of snow.

No whim of man or woman's dream
Has bridged this channel shore to shore
And built the beauty of this span.
No dream of woman, whim of man
Designed this symmetry; but frost
Vibrating at the tempest's core
Transfixed quick water as wind crossed
The surfaces of lake and river,
Crystallizing every quiver:
Frost's alchemy has changed this stream.

CARL JOHN BOSTELMANN.

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Seven Days' Survey

The Church.—A Christmas Day broadcast over the network of the National Broadcasting Company brought, from the Catacombs of Domitilla at Rome, chants by the Benedictine Choir of San Anselmo's and talks by the Most Reverend Joseph F. Busch, Bishop of St. Cloud, and Reverend William M. Ducey, O. S. B. * * * The Most Reverend John J. Glennon, Archbishop of St. Louis, has just celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood. At jubilee ceremonies at the cathedral, attended by many of the clergy and the hierarchy, a letter of felicitation from His Holiness Pope Pius XI was read. More than 14,000 people applauded the reading of a message of congratulation from President Roosevelt at the civic celebration of the jubilee. * * * "Catholic Organization for Peace in Europe," a pamphlet recently published by the Catholic Association for International Peace of Washington, D. C., tells of Catholic peace groups in France, Austria, Great Britain, Poland, Holland, Belgium and Switzerland in addition to national branches of the Catholic Union of International Studies in many other countries. * * * The *Standard* of Dublin is publishing each week in serial form the translation of a biography of Saint John Bosco by the noted Danish convert, Johannes Jorgensen. * * * The Apostolic Benediction of the Holy Father has been bestowed on the Spiritual Book Associates of New York, who select for their subscribers each year ten books of a spiritual character. * * * The 1934 Biennial Survey conducted by the Department of Education of the National Catholic Welfare Conference discloses that in 43 archdioceses and dioceses there has been a loss of 24,765, or about 1.9 percent of the pupils in Catholic elementary schools as compared with 1931-1932; 42 archdioceses and dioceses report a gain of 1,856, or about 1.2 percent of the students in Catholic high schools over the same period. * * * His Beatitude Joseph Emanuel Thomas, Patriarch of Babylonia of the Chaldeans, has ordained five priests from the Patriarchal Seminary in the Chaldean Cathedral of Mosul. Since 1870 the Patriarchal Seminary has provided the Chaldean Church with 119 priests.

The Nation.—A holiday season which was clearly more festive in appearance and in spirit than any for some years past was taken as an indication that fundamental conditions, particularly the psychological ones involving the laying out of moneys for goods and the consequent speeding up of business turnover, were improving in a manner that would have a cumulative effect. This condition is devoutly to be prayed for by business men in order to stave off having their functions as organizers and energizers of industry taken over by the *politicos*. * * * The imminent meeting of Congress was bringing various issues such as the soldiers' bonus, the dole versus work relief, continuation of NRA and the possibility of further United States participation in the League of Nations, into the limelight. * * * A broadcast to the nation by the President, on January 4, was promised to outline his recommendations for legislation by Congress. * * * Governors of several of the agricultural Southern states, reviewing their progress for the year, were unanimous in announcing an improved fiscal condition of the state governments. Taxes were reported to be running well ahead of budget expectations, which, in view of past performance, caused a note of surprise to be mingled with the self-congratulations. * * * The House Military Affairs subcommittee investigating War Department contracts described discovery of financial "magic" in the operation of an army supply base by a private company which was incorporated with $5,000 in paid-in capital and sold out after three years for $151,000 after having paid in that time $250,000 in "salaries, bonuses and extravagant expenses." * * * Faced with the threat of a municipal light plant in New York City, private utility representatives pointed out that they had paid $38,000,000 in taxes in the past year, revenue which would be lost to the government if it entered into operations that would force the private utilities out. Taxes of these companies were said to be 766 percent higher than in 1914 and 78 percent higher than in 1928. Commissioner Maurice P. Davidson, proponent of public operation, countered that the companies had paid more than $250,000,000 in dividends in the five years of the depression. * * * All price-fixing provisions of the Lumber and Timber Products Code were suspended by the National Industrial Recovery Board, but production control was continued.

The Wide World.—While the Japanese still hesitated about formally denouncing the Washington naval treaty, the French government made the startling announcement that it, too, would no longer assent to the ratios laid down at the last conference. In view of progressing German rearmament, the French navy felt that it could not promise to safeguard both the Mediterranean and the Atlantic seacoasts with a fleet equal only to that of Italy. British and American experts still insisted, however, that there remained plenty of time for negotiation as a result of which some curtailment of fears and frenzies might be expected. * * * The Stalin government announced that plotters had been unearthed not merely in former "white" circles but also inside the very ranks of the party itself. Though at this writing it was still not certain that Zinovieff and Kameneff, once powerful, had been arrested, a group of thirteen party members was brought to trial in Leningrad. Whether all this means that Stalin is genuinely all-powerful remains to be seen. * * * Neville Chamberlain, speaking in the House of Commons as Chancellor of the Exchequer, asserted that stabilization was not feasible at the present time, owing to the fact that the pound was flanked on the one hand by the dollar and on the other by the franc. Any definite monetary

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policy would therefore have to wait until the struggle between French and American money had ended. Meanwhile, he asserted, the pound had remained almost stable for two years inside the sterling area. * * * Japan was rife with spy stories. The Imperial Navy formally exonerated Lieutenant Tessier Ducros, assistant to the French naval attaché, of charges of espionage brought by several newspapers. On the island of Oshima, French Catholic missionaries were accused of things rivalling fantastic pamphlets circulated years ago by the Indiana Ku Klux Klan. Excited mobs stormed churches and were restrained from doing great damage only by the prompt action of the military. * * * Brushes between Russians and Japanese occurred along the Manchukuo frontier. Soviet infantry was reported to have marched into the protectorate territory and to have been cut off from its base of supplies. Later the disturbance, which seemed ominous for a time, fizzled out into relatively nothing of importance.

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Industry's Recovery Program.—The ninety-odd business leaders assembled at White Sulphur Springs to map out their own path toward recovery ironed out their differences in short order and on December 19 sent to President Roosevelt the results of their conferring. Although the report avoided such terms as the "dole," "open shop" and "closed shop," there could be no mistaking its general trend. It avowed a genuine willingness to cooperate with the administration in bringing about recovery and then proceeded to suggest a number of changes in the government's policy. Among these were: to shift the burden of relief from the federal government to the states; to balance the federal budget for the 1935-1936 fiscal years; to substitute direct relief (the "dole") for the more costly work relief; to avoid legislative restrictions on the kind of organizations which employees choose for collective bargaining (the "open" rather than the "closed shop"); to amend the Securities Exchange Act to aid in the resumption and expansion of private enterprise; "arbitrary limitations or undue restrictions of agricultural production, processing or distribution should be guarded against or prevented"; to end government competition with business; to reestablish the gold standard the world over; to revise the National Industrial Recovery Act in accordance with these suggestions and extend it for one year. The report asserts that "the great majority of the people owns American business." Official reactions to this joint program of the United States Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers were far from favorable. Senators, congressmen, governors and mayors characterized the report as anything from reactionary to impractical.

Federal Social Legislation.—Senator Wagner of New York, who has been a leader in the passing of federal social legislation, struck at curtailment of working hours and restriction of production in a speech before the National Catholic Alumni Association. He pointed out that if the families with incomes under $10,000 a year had their incomes increased by $1,000, there would be a gain of $27,000,000,000 in their capacity for absorbing consumer goods, "enough to buy whatever we might produce at any time in the foreseeable future." "To make one strong man work less merely in order that another strong man may do part of his work," the senator continued, "creates new jobs but does not increase output. It inevitably prevents the increase of individual wages; it forces the worker to bear the whole burden of depression. That the mass volume of wages shall be sufficient to maintain full consumer demand is an economic necessity recognized by all. Already there is discernible the tendency of wages to lag behind profits, while the real wage of the individual full-time worker is no higher than in March, 1933. This tendency must be checked. The regulation of minimum wages is a lasting function of government. Excessively long hours that subordinate the health of the many to the desires of the few, shall remain proscribed. The sweat shop shall not be reopened. The child shall not be sent back to the factory. Business shall not be denied the privilege of guarding itself against the destructive competition of the trickster and the exploiter." Senator Wagner forecast that the enactment of old-age pension legislation by the coming session of Congress would be not only a recognition of humane responsibility but also a decisive step in the campaign for economic recovery.

Developments in Mexico.—Persecution of the Church in Mexico continues. The Administrative Council of the Supreme Court recently declared that the "nationalization of the property of the clergy is an administrative and not a judicial function." This decision went against the citizens of Uruapan in the state of Michoacan who had protested when the Chief of the Federal Bureau of the Treasury had ordered that the hospital of Fray Juan de San Miguel be evacuated and the income from the property be turned into the Federal Treasury. In Puebla, capital of the state of Puebla, a building used as a home for eighty wayward girls was expropriated by the same federal chief in accordance with the Supreme Court decision that any property or building where religious education is given or religious services are celebrated passes *ipso facto* into the possession of the nation without legal procedure. Virtually no religious services are now being held in the city of Puebla since all ministers of religion must be over fifty and married. The same provision was recently decreed in the state of Colima. Two priests were recently expelled from the state of Nayarit. In Tepic in the same state the dynamiting of the offices of the semi-weekly, *Lucifer,* has aroused great indignation, and the press of Mexico City was particularly vociferous in demanding an investigation. Two more Catholic periodicals have been refused by the authorities at the main post office of the capital. At Hixtla, Chiapas authorities who sought to remove and burn an image of Saint Francis—the only statue not burned November 18—so infuriated the unarmed populace that two policemen were stoned to death and the authorities had to withdraw with their rifles and pistols. The El Paso *Herald-Post* reports that this Christmas the ancient mission bells of the

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Mission of Our Lady of Guadalupe were silent for the first time in 275 years.

A Dash of Anti-Semitism?—Speaking in New York on December 23, Rabbi Stephen S. Wise discussed the better movies campaign led by the forces of the Legion of Decency. The New York *Herald Tribune* reported him as saying that the "indecent trend" in motion pictures was partly the fault of Jewish producers, and that therefore the critics of salacious films were injecting a certain amount of anti-Semitism into their discussion of the subject. How combat it? After pointing out the reasons why so many Jews were interested in matters theatrical, the Rabbi said: "You Jews have got to free yourselves from the theatre. If you had filled your lives with something more worth while, you would not find yourselves in this position. It is partly because your slogan is not 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God,' but 'What shall we see tonight?'" Though he praised the "leadership" of the "Roman Catholic Church" and urged his hearers to support the efforts being made to secure a reputable theatre, he asserted that censorship and boycott would not solve the problem. Speaking on the same platform, Rabbi Sidney E. Goldstein emphasized more strongly the anti-Semitic talk now current. He declared: "Catholics and Protestants must now realize that upon them rests the responsibility of preventing this campaign from becoming an anti-Semitic movement in America. Upon these groups the responsibility is heavy and it must be faced. They must help us to keep this problem where it belongs—in the field of social ethics."

Back to Paganism.—Catholic bishops in Germany have done considerable plain speaking lately. Addressing a large assemblage in Cologne cathedral, His Eminence Cardinal Schulte declared: "During recent months the protagonists of a pagan Germanism have come more and more into the open with a plan and program which they at first concealed—to remove from the midst of our people the light of Christian faith. They seek to affect all aspects of life, the relations of marriage and the family, and very particularly the education of youth, with their pagan ideas. Their desire is to destroy the throne of Christ the King and to establish in its stead their own strange wisdom which, however in conflict with experience and past history, is to decide how much of Christian teaching is henceforth to be permitted the German, the Nordic man. It is not surprising that meanwhile the whole Christian folk of our country has come to understand what is going on. Now this folk realizes, now it sees quite clearly, that wherever propaganda is being made for a new German religion adapted to the Nordic race and the Nordic blood, there someone desires a return to heathenism and the abandonment of Christianity. Nevertheless it is comforting to us all to see that all who believe in Christ in this time so replete with dangers, Catholics as well as loyal Christians separated from them, are veritable rivals in the desire to show that Christianity is the real spiritual inspiration of the German people and shall continue so to be."

The Personalist Revolution.—The current number of *L'Esprit*, organ of the young French Catholics, is largely devoted to aspects of what the editors call the "personalist revolution." This movement insists that genuine social reform can be effected only through expansion, not suppression, of the personality. "Many have, as a consequence of four centuries of individualism, lost the habit of correlating their lives and actions with the community. Here we mean not a community which is exterior, artificial and juridical and with which purely abstract reciprocal relations can be maintained, but a community which leaves its stamp on each one's soul and flesh, apart from which one is only a living corpse—in short, a community the deeds of which are our deeds, the sins of which are our sins, the destiny of which is our destiny. In this matter Christians in particular have failed. They had at their disposal, in the theology of the Mystical Body, the noblest and loftiest community message of which history has record. But they suffered themselves to be permeated (not of course in the realm of principle, but certainly in the domain of daily life) by a kind of individual moralism which led them to forget practically the mysticism, the theology and the moral of community life. Frequently they possess a vivid sense of the interior life, and a keen sense of individual wrongdoing. But just as often they define 'interior' grossly, as something excluding that which is outside them or that which is collective. As if any meditation, any prayer, which even in solitude fails to be incorporated in the common worship of the Church, were not an avaricious act!" To overcome inertia and routine in these matters must be the primary task of "Christian revolutionaries."

The Australian Eucharistic Congress.—On the occasion of the centenary of the state of Victoria a National Eucharistic Congress was held at Melbourne, December 2 to 9. His Eminence Cardinal MacRory, Primate of All Ireland and Papal Legate to the Congress, presided. On the opening day Cardinal MacRory, accompanied by some 50 archbishops and bishops and 600 priests, led a procession to St. Patrick's Cathedral for a Pontifical High Mass attended by 8,000 of the laity. Representatives of the hierarchy from New Zealand, the Pacific Islands, England, America, South Africa, China and Malta attended the Congress. One-third of the clergy of the continent of Australia were also in attendance. Over 100,000 men assembled at the Melbourne Showgrounds, December 6, to hear the Holy Father, speaking from the Vatican, express his congratulations and impart his blessing, "as if present." December 7 was Children's Day, a celebration at which nearly 40,000 children participated; the Right Reverend James Liston, Bishop of Auckland, New Zealand, was the preacher at the children's Mass. The feast of the Immaculate Conception was Women's Day, and Archbishop Downey of Liverpool, England, preached at the Mass attended by 100,000 women despite the rain. December 9, the final day, 80,000 people escorted the Blessed Sacrament to Mt. St. Evin's Hospital where Cardinal MacRory gave Solemn Benediction to a throng estimated as high as 500,000.

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Lindbergh's Sky Hooks.—Specimens gathered by Colonel Charles A. Lindbergh and his wife on their flight across the North Atlantic in the summer of 1933 have just been offered as evidence that harmful organisms as well as beneficial bacteria are transported alive over tremendous distances by currents in the upper air. Fred C. Meier, of the Department of Agriculture, who has just made the announcement, succeeded in persuading the "Lone Eagle" to gather these specimens on his flight over the lands and waters of the North. Together they devised the "sky hook," an instrument projected above the plane's cockpit and equipped with glass plates covered with a sticky substance which caught the spores and other organisms that were being carried along in the air stream. After an hour's exposure these plates were covered, sealed and stored away for laboratory examination under the microscope. Colonel Lindbergh's hundreds of specimens were "scooped" out of the air at twenty-six different points between North Haven, Maine, and Copenhagen, Denmark, at altitudes varying from 2,500 to 12,500 feet. They included fungi which cause rust and smut crop diseases, some which cause early blight of potatoes, apple scab and other crop blights, and others which cause the decay of wood. Much of his collection is yet to be identified, but this discovery is hailed as an indication that animal and even human disease germs may be carried on these air currents. Mr. Meier is publishing the results of his studies of the Lindbergh data in the January *Scientific Monthly*. It is recalled that Colonel Lindbergh has already made several important contributions to scientific research and that Dr. Alexis Carrel, world-renowned surgeon and Nobel prize-winner, predicted last year that Colonel Lindbergh would leave a name as illustrious in biology as it is in aviation.

To Bed with the Chickens.—A potential club against night-clubs has been unwittingly supplied by a German writer, according to the Berlin *Auslese*. This is Theodor Stöckmann, a man normally engaged in academic pursuits, whose experiments led him to conclude that health comes from going to bed with the chickens. He was nervous and ill for a long time. Reasoning that this condition was the result of overwork, Stöckmann sought relief from plenty of sleep. To his surprise, he writes, the nervous malady grew worse and worse. The more he slept the wearier he was. Thereupon he decided to give mother nature a try. One night he went to bed at 7 and rose again at 11.20. To his astonishment, he noted almost immediate relief. Thereafter he did all his sleeping before midnight and—according to all appearances—became a healthy and vigorous man who didn't know he had a nerve in his body. He tried to persuade others to do likewise, but the path of the prophet is a rocky one. Nine years ago, however, two lady invalids accepted his advice, and since then he has induced some forty-odd persons to try the experiment. Stöckmann now feels entitled to conclude that going to bed with the chickens is an essential guarantee of good health, and that repudiation of this recipe means at least a measure of disaster. He realizes that the world cannot suddenly be organized to tuck commuters in bed the minute they get home, but thinks something ought really to be done about it.

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National Commerce.—The annual report of the Department of Commerce on the major economic indices for the last fiscal year, which ended June 30, showed strongly improving business conditions in the United States, though much room for improvement still remained. "Of special significance," wrote Secretary Roper, head of the department, "is the gain of approximately 24 percent in industrial production, of 26 percent in factory employment and of 43 percent in factory payrolls." Other favorable indices were improved purchase power in the farm areas, a 17.5 percent increase in railroad traffic, a 48 percent increase in construction contracts awarded, an increase in imports of 20 percent by quantity and 47 percent by value, as compared with the preceding year. Total deposits in banks also increased sharply, but the value of loans reported decreased by 5 percent. Investments by banks increased $1,510,000,000, with all but $99,000,000 of the increase accounted for by investment in government securities. Although railroad earnings for the year were 2.09 percent on the total investment, they were still operating at a deficit after fixed charges on their bonds and preferred stocks were deducted. The Secretary said in summary, "While evidences of the progress made are concrete and numerous, the fiscal year closed with the capital goods industry still greatly depressed, private construction very low, unemployment large and relief demands making a steady and severe drain on the national budget."

Sun Spots and Progress.—Announcement by Dr. Albert J. Newlin, director of the Ricard Memorial Observatory, at Santa Clara, California, that two new sun spots had been observed, indicated that the eleven-year periodicity of these phenomena was going to continue on schedule. These spots are of more than academic interest as the studies of the late Father J. S. Ricard and others have shown a marked coincidence of sun spots and meteorological conditions in the world. Their work, said Dr. Newlin, has indicated that sun spots are accompanied by increased rainfall, higher water level in lakes and wells and increased vegetable growth and animal fecundity. "In the drought areas particularly, land production is stimulated and crops are bountiful," said Dr. Newlin. He commented further on the observed tendency for improved business conditions at such times. There has been considerable plausible speculation on the reasons for this picking up in human affairs as well as in those of the other growing things of the earth. That great masses of the population are faced with a condition of relative bounteousness of the earth and are not subjected to the directly acerbating effects of drought, besides the indirect depressive effects through crop and animal failure, it is thought, spreads an era of cheerfulness, of constructive effort and of striking out and trying new things, that is as vast as the tides and in its larger aspects as uncontrollable by politics or mere wishful optimism.

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The Play

By GRENVILLE VERNON

Romeo and Juliet

THERE will be more than a few aged men and women who in far-away days to come will tell their grandchildren of the night they witnessed Katharine Cornell play Shakespeare's Juliet. They will nod their heads and wag their beards and lament the passing of the good old days when the drama was the drama and actresses were actresses. And their grandchildren will smile a little pityingly and perhaps go to see another Juliet, and thereby lay the foundation for the same old story, which they will tell their grandchildren. Thus it has been, is, and always will be. But these are not the days to come, and the men and women who saw Katharine Cornell's Juliet are most of them as yet far from aged; yet one thing they are as sure of as they will be fifty years from now—they looked upon beauty of a rare and poignant kind, a beauty at once physical and spiritual. Best of all, the beauty was not only in the performance of the star, though Miss Cornell's Juliet is one of the transcendent impersonations of the modern theatre; it informed the whole performance: the acting of the principals, the movement of the crowds, the scenery, the costumes, the lighting. Not in many years has New York seen a synthesis so perfect, in which each part was so admirable in itself and yet so justly proportioned to the whole; in which the spirit of the poet was so beautifully evoked; in which the story moved so poignantly, so inevitably to its end. It was a performance at once reverent and vibrant; neither "modern" nor archaic; but infinitely human; a performance which glorified neither the star, the actors, nor the director, but all three together, and therefore the play.

So as the play is and was the thing, let me first deal with it. In the first place the cuts have been reduced to a minimum. Miss Cornell and Guthrie McClintic have given us more Shakespeare than I have ever seen before. They have not been afraid of the poetry, of long speeches, of the very things that make Shakespeare unique and transcendent. And the star has not taken the poetry and the long speeches only for herself; they are portioned out equitably as Shakespeare wrote them. Moreover, we see the Nurse as she always has been in the printed page, but so rarely seen in public representation—one of the most racy and vital of Shakespeare's characters. Nothing has been done to make an actor's holiday; the play alone has been considered. So many modern producers of Shakespeare have become obsessed with the necessity of what they call"pace" that they have put on the plays with everything but the bare essenials of the action omitted, save when the star has demanded the chance to display his or her vocal virtuosity. And this is fatal. Shakespeare's poetry, his verbal music, his philosophy and imagery are not the sole prerogative of the star. Even his humblest characters have their moments of immortality. This is what the able direction of Mr. McClintic has given them, and given them generously. We have gradually become aware that perhaps alone among American actresses Katharine Cornell has been touched by the wand of genius. How far she will go no one as yet can say, for Juliet is not a supreme test of an actress's powers. But in her capacity as a producer she has shown one virtue which many geniuses have failed to attain, through lack of generosity of spirit—she has shown herself an artist. To her the whole has been greater than the part; a pun perhaps, but one which expresses a depth of truth. She has submerged herself in the genius of the dramatist, and through that very act has found her genius transfigured. Her magnanimity has freed the spirit of the poet, has allowed him to spread his wings, and helped by those wings she herself has soared to heights which even she could never have reached alone.

What then are the significant virtues of Miss Cornell's performance? Her Juliet is youthful, not as youthful perhaps in mere externals as Miss Le Gallienne's admirable enactment, but youthful in the things of the spirit. For a moment after she first appears we doubt her thirteen years, but only for a moment. Once she begins to speak she is youth, pure, passionate, and frank. Every movement, every inflection of her voice, tells us that she is Shakespeare's Juliet. And what grace informs those movements, and how exquisitely musical is that voice! How innocently unconscious of tragedy she is at first, and then how wonderfully she evokes the gathering sense of her fate! It is here that the full glory of her voice begins to show itself, a voice which in richness, clarity and poignancy of timbre has no equal on the stage. Yet never once do we have the feeling she is listening to that voice. She speaks because she must speak, because only in that way and in that voice can she utter the things which tear her heart. There may be those who will say that she is lacking slightly in the earlier and lighter passages, though I for one found no such lack, but in the balcony scene, in the scene in her bedroom, and in her drinking of the potion, no Juliet of this generation has equaled her.

Basil Rathbone's Romeo is in face and figure all that Romeo should be, and though there may be a slight lack at times of warmth of expression, it is the most satisfying Romeo of recent years. Brian Aherne's Mercutio was at once masculine, humorous and debonair. He gave the Queen Mab speech with fire, fancy and whimsical abandon, and his death scene was admirable in its irony. And then the Nurse! Never has New York seen a Nurse the equal of Edith Evans. That this distinguished British actress should come all the way to America to play what is usually a minor part had caused wonder among those who know the stage, but given as it was, largely freed of cuts, the reason was apparent. The Nurse is one of the supreme comic figures of the theatre. Its humor, its unction, its utter lack of morality was magnificently brought out by Miss Evans. Admirable performances too were given by Orson Welles as Tybalt, by Charles Waldron as Father Laurence, by David Vivian as Peter, and by Moroni Olsen as Capulet. And the scenery and costumes of Jo Mielziner were superb. (At the Martin Beck Theatre.)

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Communications

THE FARMER PARISH

The Middle West.

TO the Editors: Would you and your readers please give me your attention for a moment, even if you cannot immediately see what I am driving at?

The parish, of which I am going to say a few words, comprises some sixty to seventy families. The fluctuation is due to the fact that at times one family buys up two or three farms but later on, when the sons are getting married, these become again individual properties of some 100 to 150 acres. The average size of farms in this neighborhood ranges from 75 to 125 acres. About one-third of them are unencumbered; another third is partly mortgaged, but can carry on fairly easily; but one-third is almost submerged by debts and sooner or later will come under the hammer. The average number of children per family is five: one below school age, two in school, two out of school and helping to earn money. For a time there were two factories in the neighborhood, which allowed these to earn a living. But at present one of them is closed almost completely, the other works but on half time. So several of the big boys go as far as seventy miles to a larger city, and come home Saturday. The girls either do housework in this city or factory work in a clothing factory near here.

The parish has had a hard time ever since its organization. How conservative it has been you may guess from the fact that within fifty years it spent just $50,000, or an average of $1,000 per year. This was sufficient only because in the building more than half was raised by begging, and up to ten years ago the priest's salary was but $600, and the church was heated by stoves, the firewood being given by the parishioners from their woods. But for the last ten years the parish has had to raise $2,400 per annum, since the salary demanded by the ordinary is $1,500, that given to teacher and organist is $400 and coal and electricity cost $300. You can figure yourself how much is left for running expenses. If extraordinary expenses occur, such as repair of a broken-down boiler costing about $150, the pastor does not know how to meet them. As yet the parish has no Catholic parochial school. All the children in the nearby school being Catholic, the teacher, who is likewise Catholic, and organist, sacristan and fireman, sees to it that they attend daily Mass and they are instructed in the church every day for half an hour after Mass, before they go to school. Surely, in a way, an ideal condition. But these last few years it has been impossible to collect full pew-rent. The parish has been slipping to the amount of $300 to $400 per year.

Why all this detail? Because your parish in the new subsistence home farm districts will face even greater handicaps. Who is going to build the church in a territory, where the families earn a mere subsistence? Who is to meet even the running expenses? And if there be need of a parochial school, what then? If the small farmer parish is a problem today, what of the parish in a subsistence territory? They crack jokes about the persistent announcements of money-raising in our churches. Well, I can assure you it is no fun for the pastor to face a congregation and ask for money and more money, when he sees before him men who make a bare living on a mortgaged farm or who are liable to be evicted any moment. Two-thirds of the parish have a rather hard struggle to raise enough for taxes and interest on mortgages or other debts. Yet your subsistence farm parish will be even more handicapped.

Perhaps, I will be told, they need no parish of their own. These subsistence farms are near cities. The automobile is the solution. Is it? First of all, it costs money to run an automobile, at least $.015 per mile. A year's attendance would cost about $10, quite an amount from a mere subsistence income. And will the city parish welcome such as can contribute but little, if anything? In this little parish the paying members grumble when at the end of the year they hear in the report that some have defaulted. "Why don't they pay, like us?" Selfish! you say. Right you are. But oh, so human!

To my mind there is no other solution than a new religious community, which is ready to serve with but small recompense. Mind you, the writer does not claim that the farmer parish pastor is not entitled to as big a salary as the city pastor, but the farmer congregation simply cannot pay it and exist. Still less can the parish in a subsistence area do it.

Unless God sends us a saint, who founds a new community, based on the principle to serve for nothing or almost nothing, it will be impossible to do anything for the subsistence area. The same holds good for the Sisters. Unless God does send us such an idealist, and inspires boys and girls to offer themselves for such a service, the writer cannot see how these sheep living in subsistence parishes can be taken care of.

FRANK DEURINGER.

CATHOLIC YOUTH MOVEMENT

St. Louis, Mo.

TO the Editor: Miss Ruth Smith's letter in the October 26 number of THE COMMONWEAL is indeed timely, but it merely expresses the main ideas and methods of two flourishing Catholic youth movements on the Continent of Europe. Both are organized on a parish basis, and both are ambitious of giving youth an outlet for its enormous service potentialities, combating at the same time materialism and Communism.

The one, the Jociste Movement of Belgium and France, comprises different sections for the two sexes, and separate subdivisions for different interests: workers' groups; school children's groups; university students' groups. It provides study clubs, recreation facilities and practical schemes of militant Catholic Action.

The other, the Grail organization of Holland, Germany and Great Britain, is for girls and young women alone. Culture and the acquisition of knowledge are set forth by the Grail in their most charming and attractive aspects. Grail members work quietly and purposefully;

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there is no blatant, boastful, yet idle propaganda; they become, however, really active apostles of the Church and of Christ. The central organization is a society of women who have taken religious vows as Ladies of Nazareth, but dress in the fashions of our times. With this organization thus provided, would not Miss Smith's ideas be best furnished by inviting the Grail to come to the country? Already many of our schools and colleges have been interested in the Grail by the English publication *Fire*, which is being distributed by the Bruce Publishing Company, of Milwaukee, at $1.50 a year. With the Grail for our girls and young women, and a similar society for our young men, we can give our Catholic youth wholesome recreation, true culture and a powerful means of combating the dangers of the times.

Eva J. Ross.

DESPERATE NEED

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor: We never appreciate our own good fortune until we contrast it with the ill-fortune of others. However much we may have suffered in the depression, we should be extremely grateful to Almighty God if He has given us health during it.

There is no better way of showing Him our gratitude than by sharing the little we have with those in desperate need. And surely the most abandoned of these are the lepers in the mission fields. There is a vast number of them in Catholic hospitals, or who come for treatment to dispensaries conducted by missionary priests and Sisters. The missionaries have little themselves, but they share their crusts with the lepers.

The only special appeal made by the Society for the Propagation of the Faith is a Christmas appeal for the lepers. We trust that generous hearts everywhere will send an alms for them this Christmas season. No matter how small, it will be very gratefully received and will be divided among the poorest "remnants of humanity."

Send your offering to your own Diocesan Director of the Society (in every diocese) or to the National Director,

Rt. Rev. Mgr. William Quinn, P. A.,
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109 East 38th Street, New York, N. Y.

MISSING VOLUMES

San Francisco, Calif.

TO the Editor: Perhaps you would broadcast for us in your columns the fact that we are trying to complete our file of The Commonweal in order to have them bound and placed on our reference room shelves. We have many duplicates, and would be glad to exchange with other subscribers. We lack the following numbers:

Index and title page to Volumes II, III, IV, VI, VIII, X; Volume IV, Numbers 12 and 18; Volume V, Numbers 11 and 12; Volume VI, Number 23; Volume VII, Number 19; Volume XI, Numbers 12, 13, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 26; Volume XIV, Number 25.

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Next Week

The next issue of The Commonweal will be largely by practical business men. Each will relate his opinion on some important phase of the national outlook at this critical time. CURRENTS, CROSS-CURRENTS, CONCLUSIONS, by Bernard J. Rothwell, president of the Bay State Milling Company. portrays swiftly the uncertainties in the midst of which business is being conducted today. Greed and disrespect for authority, he sees as the principal undermining factors. . . . THE STORE IN 1935, by P. A. O'Connell, president of E. T. Slattery Company, is a hopeful report on retail trade prospects for the current year. The writer believes that the priming of the pump has been successful and that this year there will be a very substantial increase in employment and in retail trade. . . . SOMETHING INDUSTRIALISTS NEGLECT, by Edward J. Mehren, president of the Portland Cement Association, visualizes the fundamental, inescapable necessity in our economic system if business is to improve and if we are to escape a revolution setting up some disordered and untried system. . . . CREDIT DELUSIONS, by Ernest F. Du Brul, a Mid-West industrial engineer, analyzes five prescriptions for quickly building another boom which he believes to be rank poisons—unsound credit expansion, debasement of metallic money, issuance of fiat paper money, raising prices and repudiation of debts. . . . PLANNED ECONOMY AND SCRAMBLED THINKING, by Richard Dana Skinner, investment counsel, undertakes to redefine the difference between regulated competition and planned economy and points out that when properly understood, one can be most effective in some cases and the other in certain other cases. From this it follows that neither should be made to apply to all cases.

Books

Thirteen Novels

SITTING down to review thirteen novels, one asks oneself what immediate purpose the novel serves. The answer would seem to be: it entertains. But that it can do in various ways; it can be mere amusement, or it can entertain us as, in the prose of the last century, we are "entertained by serious thoughts"—it can convince us that its particular interpretation of reality is a true one, or at least one relevant to reality: the novel may either stupefy or stimulate. The great majority of novels, of course, are intended to stupefy; they are an escape from life, but not as that is usually said of literature: the escape merely endures for the period of actual reading; it is the cessation of mental activity in the act of perusing print. What is less obvious is that there exists a class of novel whose appeal is, finally, this stupefication but which pretends to attention with more serious claims; it is chosen by the book clubs, it is often said to mark a new epoch in American letters, and it gives those who read the feeling that good literature is not so very hard to appreciate after all. And with these reflections, one is inclined to echo the preacher's lament that of making many books there is no end, until one realizes that with books of this sort continued production is necessary; they stupefy but once, and no one will turn to them again. These may be cynical words with which to preface a review, yet they do aid in establishing a perspective, giving remarks of praise and censure a frame of reference.

In "Gay Crusader" (Appleton-Century. $2.50) Magdalen King-Hall plainly intends to do no more than entertain in the first sense given above. Her intention is humorous, and her humor is of the sort which might be called "even as you and I humor," in which characters remote in time or social position are showed to be not so very different from the reader, who, in the process of having his vanity reassured, is made to laugh. Miss King-Hall tells her story by a series of interior monologues located in the minds of her four chief characters, two crusading knights and two princesses. The advantage of this method for the author is that it enables her to include all the trivia which occupies a wandering mind and thereby brings her story up to book length, and it also allows her to present her historical detail in an indirect fashion. The disadvantage for the reader is that, Miss King-Hall's characters initially being stock figures of popular fiction projected against a medieval background, all these ruminations and stray observations are dull. The reader, like the Queen, simply is not amused.

Although Miss King-Hall strives for unity by putting her background in her characters' heads, she makes no fusion of the two; and a similar disparity marks Pendelton Hogan's "The Dark Comes Early" (Ives Washburn. $2.00). Mr. Hogan has conceived his people in the terms of the superlative style of romantic fiction; his setting—Texas of the thirties and forties—is a rather painful transcription of his research. The result is a complete absence of tonal evenness, which prevents the reader

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from ever making the suspension of disbelief necessary if the author's highly romantic story is to beguile. The reader is jerked from the high emotional coloring of the characters to the flat pedagogy of the historical passages; both remain discretely uninteresting.

No such failure to achieve an artistic whole marks the writing of Margaret Irwin in "The Proud Servant" (Harcourt, Brace. $2.50). Miss Irwin is lavish with historical detail in her excellent story of the first Earl of Montrose, the gallant Royalist who fought the Covenanters in Charles's behalf, but one feels that this detail is included in a total vision of a particular life, and it thereby gains relevancy and vividness. Few liberties are taken with history and Miss Irwin, as she acknowledges, closely follows Mr. Buchan's account of the noble Scot, yet in so far as the author penetrates into her people's minds she seems to have done so unwisely, for the essence of the historical novel is in its being a pageant, in its living pictorial quality, and a concern with what goes on *inside* must always result in blurred edges. Despite this, and a prose which now and then loses its subdued sixteenth-century atmosphere by the use of bad modern constructions, the novel does entertain with what seems to be reality, and it is no less amusing for that.

The present is the scene in "Triumph," by Frederick Niven (Dutton. $2.50), though the story has some of the exoticism of the historical novel in that it is laid in a South American city. This exoticism, however, is slightly in the distance, for the more particular scene of the novel is the foreign colony of the city. The "triumph" is a delayed one, that of an Englishwoman who feels she has lost caste through the tippling of her musician husband. The first half of the book, dealing with events from the angle of the husband, is the better; it reflects much of the sensitivity of the man itself and, while it has no new observations to make, one is aware of the documentary accuracy of its writing: it does not in itself present a true fictional creation but one never doubts that it speaks of a real person. The same is in a measure true of the characters in the second half; but they are treated at too short length and in too little detail for them to assume the roundness of the George Heriot of the first half. It is unfortunate that Mr. Niven saw fit to kill off Heriot so soon, for he is a character whose sensibility makes interesting events otherwise thin and too familiar in fiction.

Ethel Boileau gives us nothing unfamiliar in fiction—though that is not to say she gives us all we might ask for. "When Yellow Leaves" (Dutton. $2.50) relates the difficulties of maintaining an English estate in these hard times and shows how a kind-hearted American actress can lighten them. The whole mood and manner of the story is so well indicated in these lines on the first page of the book that they will serve better than any exposition: "When he was up at Oxford in 1914, Humphrey Wilder (you remember young Wilder who wrote a little first-class poetry and then went out and got killed in the Gallipoli landing) said of him: 'Most people wait for things to happen—Michael runs out to meet them. . . .'" If one is attracted by that, then "When Yellow Leaves" is indeed an entertaining book.

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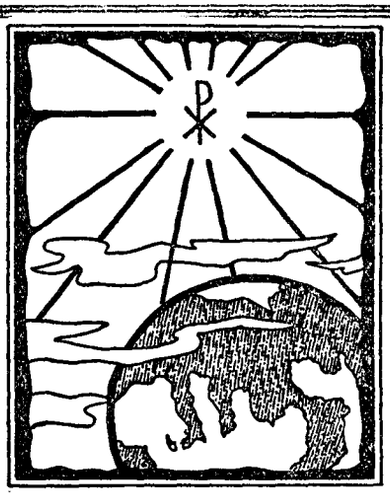

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THE LITURGICAL PRESS

St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minn.

E. H. Young also deals in a special atmosphere, and one's liking of "The Curate's Wife" (Harcourt, Brace. $2.50) will depend on one's attitude toward that atmosphere. Miss Young carries an air of Mrs. Gaskell and Trollope, with the inevitable differences caused by the intervening years. In this book she continues the story of the Rendalls begun in "Jenny Wren," telling of what befell Jenny's sister Dahlia after she married the young curate. One of the differences the years have made between Miss Young and Mrs. Gaskell is that the former's characters stand out less distinctly; the scene is a modern English town, but it is painted in the manner of another age—it is viewed through an atmosphere of time, which obscures and softens all that transpires, so that none of the emotions dealt with seem very immediate or are very moving. That real skill is needed to achieve this effect cannot be doubted, so that as Miss Young lulls the reader into soft quiescence, he has the satisfaction of knowing that it is being done in a good workmanlike fashion.

"Resurrection," by William Gerhardi (Harcourt, Brace. $2.50), is rather confusing; it is hard to say whether Mr. Gerhardi is writing satire or a personal confession of faith or both. Mr. Gerhardi writes in the first person and evidently of himself; he appears to be worried by the fact that he is not so young as he once was, but he finds comfort in a "psychic" experience which assures him of his immortality. Besides letting us know this and many of his personal habits, the author gives an account of a year of travel and portraits of various London figures. The only explanation of the book appears to be that, in these days of mass production of fiction, Mr. Gerhardi has felt called on to turn out a novel and has utilized what scraps of material he had at hand. His wit is not enough to save him from being tedious.

Cornelia Stratton Parker writes straightforward autobiography in "Wanderer's Circle" (Houghton Mifflin. $3.50). It is the record of an active life, lived by one with deep gusto for living, and tells from a more personal angle of the things which Mrs. Parker has related in other books and in articles: her experiences among factory workers, her trip with her daughter around the British Isles, and her voyages in a collapsible boat on the German rivers. And there are, of course, experiences less pleasant than these. Though Mrs. Parker looks on life with some of the jollity of a New England tea-room hostess, she is akin to Mr. Gerhardi in her simple determination to write; finally, one feels, she has not a great deal to tell and must justify her *furor scribendi* by more than the substance of her writing: this she does by adopting the attitude of the main character in her own "Jenny the Joyous," just as Mr. Gerhardi poses as the bright young man (with new overtones of seriousness). Mrs. Parker clearly gets a great deal of pleasure from writing, rather too much for the reader's own pleasure. The inclusion of her book in a review dealing with fiction is accounted for by the fact that her persevering cheerfulness makes her book escape literature, which, narrating actual events, will convince its destined audience that they are reading more than a mere novel.

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The spate of books expositing the elementary joys of agrarian life may point to radical change in the spirit of the times, a longing for simplicity and order. Yet these books all have a nostalgic quality; one feels that they speak of a life which—at least to their authors' minds—is irrevocably gone. It is a species of the childhood of the emotions and the appetites which they seek to evoke again; and if they deal with things tangible and almost crude rather than with the tenuous dreams of escape literature like Mr. Cabell's, it may be because real life has in so many cases become a tenuous dream. "Plowing on Sunday" by Sterling North (Macmillan. $2.50) is an account of life on a Wisconsin farm before the entry of America into the war. The setting in time is important because a good deal of Mr. North's effectiveness issues from the accuracy with which he pictures the period, its cars, songs and changes. He does give these things a vitality, though they stand apart too much from the rest of his story to be fictional in the best sense. His characters are not documentary in the way that Mr. Niven's are; they are merely embodiments of the qualities Mr. North wishes to celebrate, and within those limits serve their purpose well. The plot, concocted with a liberal dash of Mr. Faulkner's Gothic horrors, serves no purpose.

Into the same category as "Plowing on Sunday" falls *Gladys A. Reichard's* "Spider Woman" (Macmillan. $3.50), an account of her experiences learning to weave among the Navajos; in it can be seen quite plainly the appeal of a return to primitive joy in life because it pictures an actual primitive community. Part of this appeal of course resides in the strangeness of Navajo life, but that element is not unduly emphasized and Dr. Reichard has none of the usual ethnologist's condescension, so like the social worker's, for the alien people of whom she writes. The repeated descriptions of rug-weaving finally are boring; the author writes, however, on the whole with easy simplicity. Dr. Reichard holds out the attractions of the novelist and adds to them the satisfaction of increasing one's knowledge.

Cynthia Lombardi has chosen the first person as the means of telling the story of "Autumn's Torch" (Appleton-Century. $2.00). That story is an "international romance" (both heroine and hero are Americans, it is true, but they get about some) in which the heroine is very lovely and has white skin—of which, according to the convention of such tales, the reader must constantly be reminded, just as all her adventures must be raised up to an unnatural emotional pitch. This necessarily being done by the heroine, the novel is even more ridiculous than it otherwise would be.

What would commonly be called grim reality, in contrast to Mrs. Lombardi's world, awaits the reader of "The Executioner Waits," by Josephine Herbst (Harcourt, Brace. $2.50), which, one supposes, is the second of the three stages of the progress toward violent precipitation into the class struggle of the Trexler family of "Pity Is Not Enough." The bourgeois meanness of the older members and the bourgeois uncertainty of the younger ones are carefully displayed, and Miss Herbst reveals an accurate knowledge of the class with which

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she deals. Although she comes closer to creating character than any other novelist in this review (Miss Irwin is a special case, whose characters already exist), Miss Herbst always falls short of the final perfection—which failure ensues from reviewing characters by way of the Marxian ideology: if characters must be evaluated according to dogmas that ignore the cardinal facts of human nature, it follows that they cannot be presented as whole people; the essentials of humanity are lacking and the reader is giving a simulacrum of it devised with carefully observed minutiae. Much of this minutiae in itself is very true, and to the extent one can concentrate on it in forgetfulness of the fact that its selection is dictated by an impossible creed, it will be found moving. Miss Herbst's style is especially significant: the professional writer will see in it signs of an expert craftsman, but the task of the craftsman has been to reduce language to a lowest common denominator, to an unrelieved grey vulgarity which will accord with the predetermined nature of the novel's people. Any beauty would be quite out of place in it.

Unfortunately space allows only briefest mention of Henry Handel Richardson's collection of short stories, "The End of a Childhood" (Norton. $2.50). Miss Richardson can observe outer detail with as much accuracy as Miss Herbst, but the detail is comprehended by something more than its own worth as "fact." The title story is explained in its subtitle: "Four Further Chapters in the Life of Cuffy Mahony." Cuffy will be remembered by readers of "The Fortunes of Richard Mahony." Other stories deal with the growing pains of girlhood, a professor's experiment in marriage, a musician's search for his feminine ideal, etc. Miss Richardson is comparable to another Antipodeon writer, Katherine Mansfield, in her marked femininity; the femininity of Miss Mansfield was of the drawing-room, that of Miss Richardson is of the nursery and the kitchen and is the richer and more substantial, and in these stories, in varying degrees, manifests itself in the human understanding and sense of the dramatic which are requisite to fiction. These are qualities difficult to analyze, but their presence is happily evident in Miss Richardson's work.

GEOFFREY STONE.

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